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BILLY WHISKERS OUT FOR FUN

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By
*Frances Trego
Montgomery*



THE
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BILLY RAN BETWEEN THE SHORT, FAT LEGS OF THE COOK AND UPSET HIM.
(PAGE 20)

BILLY WHISKERS OUT FOR FUN

BY

FRANCES TREGO MONTGOMERY ✓

AUTHOR OF "BILLY WHISKERS," "BILLY WHISKERS' KIDS," "BILLY
WHISKERS' ADVENTURES," "BILLY WHISKERS IN THE MOVIES,"

"FRANCES AND THE IRREPRESSIBLES AT BUENA
VISTA FARM," "THE WONDERFUL ELEC-
TRIC ELEPHANT," ETC., ETC.



✓ ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL HAWTHORNE ✓

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Billy ran between the short, fat legs of the cook and upset him.

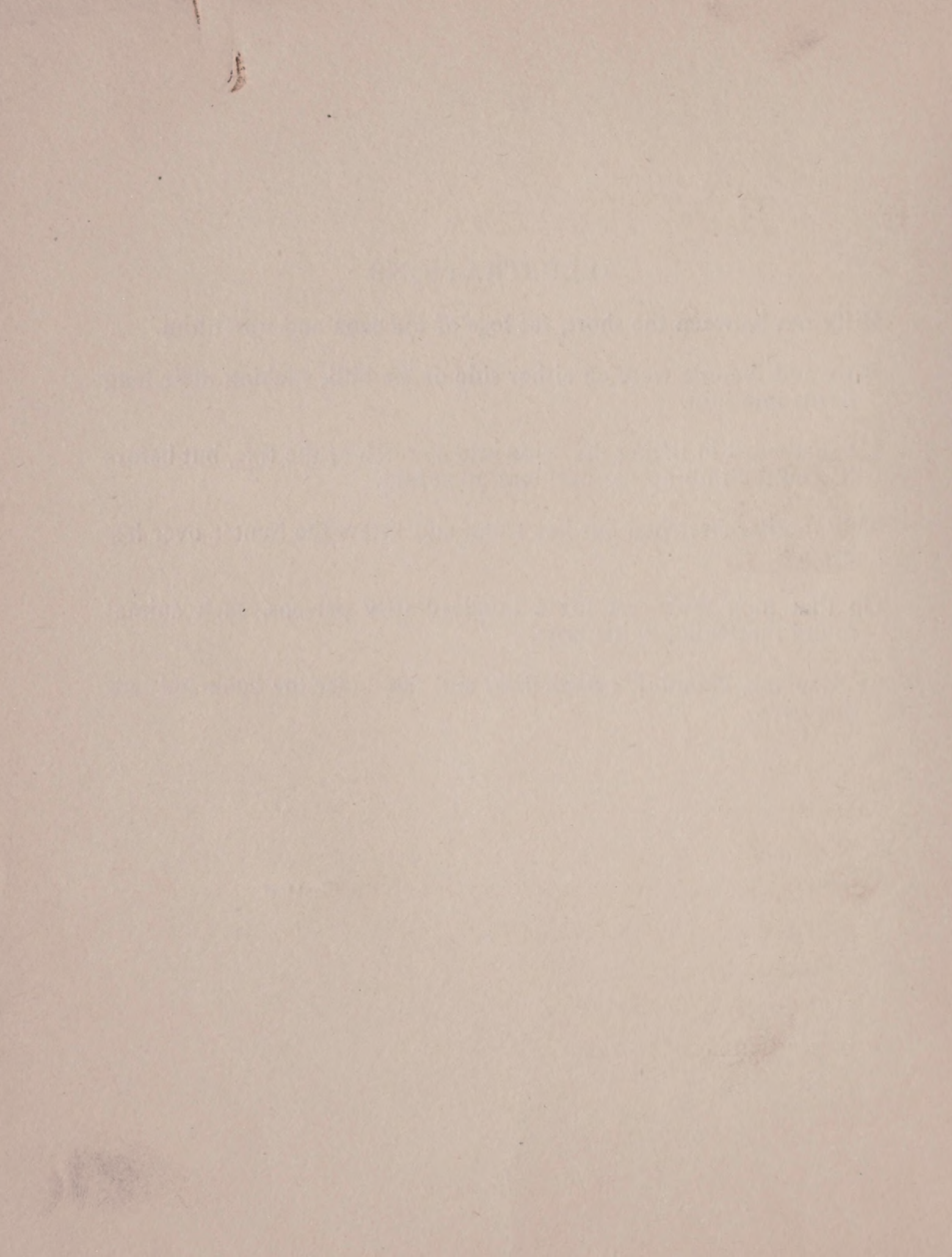
Billy and Nannie were on either side of the bull, sticking their long horns into him.

He succeeded in lifting the bride into a crotch of the tree, but before he could climb up the bull was upon him.

"My mother stretched out her trunk and threw the hunter over her head."

On that long table, set for a hundred fifty persons, each animal found something to his taste.


"Follow me, Nannie!" called Billy and ran under the hook-and-ladder auto.



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CHAPTER I

BILLY WHISKERS, NANNIE, STUBBY AND BUTTON START
ON A PLEASURE TRIP

“Y dear Nannie, what do you say to our seeking the sunny South for the winter? I am getting too old to enjoy huddling up to the lee side of a strawstack to keep warm or sleeping in a drafty barn. Here it is the first of September and by traveling slowly and taking our time, we could reach southern California by the first of November.”

“California! Did I hear you say California?”

“Yes. Why not?”

“I thought you meant Florida or Mississippi or some of those states when you said *South*, for I always think of California as West and cold, not warm.”

“Oh, no! I don’t like Florida and those Gulf of Mexico States as well as the warm climate of California. They have too many crocodiles and snakes to suit me.”

“But, Billy, think what a hard trip it would be to travel all those thousands of miles.”

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"Not at all, my dear! We would travel only when we felt like it. At other times we could find some nice farm on which to live or a small town to stay in and we would enjoy the change of scenery as we traveled along from day to day. I have been on the move so much that I feel it would be positively impossible for me to stay here on this old farm away up in Wisconsin where nothing happens from one month's end to the other all winter."

"I know, dear, you have the wanderlust in your blood, and rather than have you stay here and be unhappy, I will go with you."

"That is said like a darling little wife, and I know you will never regret the trip. It will do you good and liven you up."

"We will ask Stubby and Button if they don't want to go with us."

"No use asking them if they want to go for you know perfectly well that nothing would keep them from going unless you positively forbade them and then I doubt not that they would follow you at a close distance."

All this conversation had taken place beside a strawstack on the farm where Billy Whiskers had been born. As he and Nannie stood beside it chewing the full wheat heads that had escaped the threshing machine, Billy had thought out the plan of crossing the continent on foot just to be doing something.

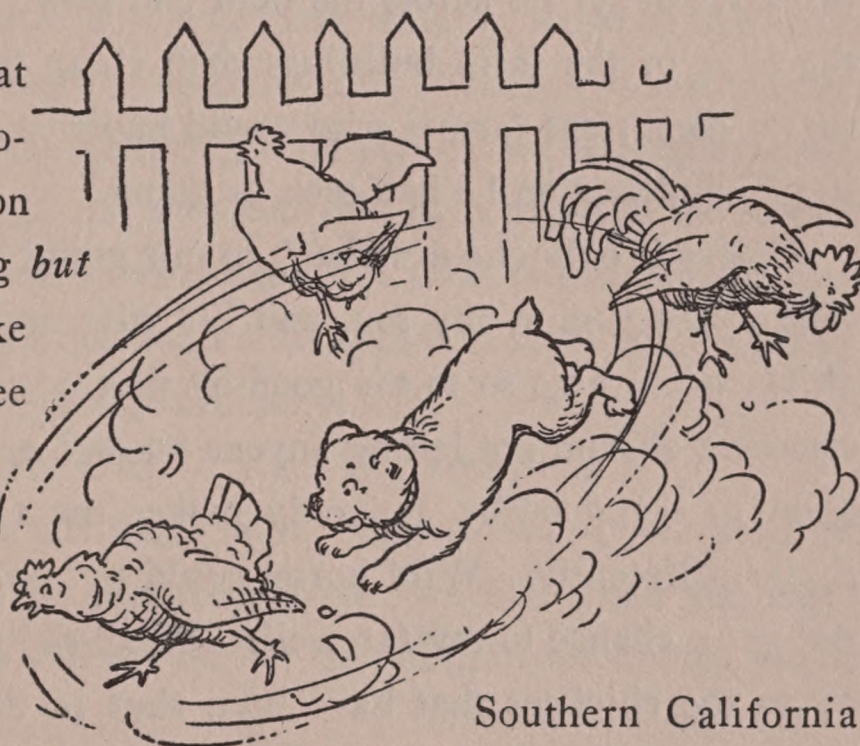
"Hi, there, Stub, you and Button come over here a minute! I have something to tell you."

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"From the way Nannie's eyes are sparkling, I bet it is something exciting," said Stubby.

"If so, hurry and tell us and relieve our feelings," implored Button. "I hope to goodness it has action in it, for I can't stand this monotonous life much longer with nothing to do but eat our three good meals a day."

"You will find that what I have to propose to you has action in it. It has nothing *but* action. It is to take a short walk of three thousand nine hundred miles or so from here to where the Pacific Ocean laps the shores of



Southern California.

On hearing this, Stubby began to run round after his tail for joy.

"Hurrah for you!" exclaimed Button. "I am with you!" and he started to chase the chickens around the barnyard.

After they had run off some of their excitement, the two quieted down and Stubby came back and wanted to know when Billy proposed starting.

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"This very night," replied Billy. "There is no time like the present. Besides, the roads are in excellent condition for traveling as we have just had a rain that has laid the dust. It is full moon, too. We will wait until the family have all gone to bed, then we will give a hasty good-by to all our friends on the farm and start. And I think we better go across the field and down through the woods at the back of the farm buildings than along the road, as we would surely meet some farmer who would know us and tell Mr. Windlass in which direction he had seen us going."

"There is only one drawback to our going and that is leaving behind Billy Junior, my son, and his wife and darling twin grandchildren. I hate so to say good-by that whenever I go I feel like sneaking off and not letting anyone know I am leaving. It does no good to say good-by and only makes me feel sad. But Nannie thinks differently. Wild horses could not pull her away if she did not get a chance to say farewell. There she goes now to say good-by to the chickens that have been shut in that coop to fatten for market, but they don't know that and they just stuff themselves with the food that is given them and quarrel over it, entirely oblivious of the fact that every mouthful they take puts on more fat and brings them that much nearer the day of their death."

Five hours after this conversation when all good-bys had been said, had you looked you would have seen two splotches of white

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weaving along in the high grass of the meadow, followed by a yellow splotch and a black splotch. For the long journey to California had begun.

They soon crossed the meadow and came out on the railroad track that led to Chicago by way of Milwaukee, Racine and Sheboygan. They followed this track as it was good walking between the rails and they were in no danger of being seen by farmers. Consequently they made good time and stopped to rest just before daylight on the outskirts of a small town. It was just light enough to see the smoke from the chimneys of the houses when the four friends awoke and sat up on their haunches and held a consultation as to whether they should go through the town or around it.

"I need a shave," said Billy. "Let's go through it."

"You don't mean to tell me," said Nannie, "that you would be willing to go through the experience you once had when you were tied in a barber's chair and the barber shaved off your beard, would you?"

"Oh! I had forgotten about that. But you fail to mention how I stood around the place and waited for him to go to dinner, and how I butted him over a grocer's wagon that was standing in front of his shop, and when he landed, it was in the middle of a mud puddle," and at the memory of it Billy laughed until his sides shook.

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"I too say we go through the town," said Stubby, "for I haven't had a piece of butcher's meat for ages and I should like to feel the blood trickling down my throat when my teeth sink into it and listen to the sound of my teeth grinding the bones. Yes, I say we go through."

"That juicy meat sounds pretty good to me," said Button. "I would not mind a steak myself even should it happen to be a tough one."

"Well, Nannie, what have you to say to our plans? Should we be unlucky enough to be shut up, we are to baa, bark, and meow three times in quick succession and repeat three minutes apart. This is to be a guide to Nannie should she come back looking for us. If you hear a goat baaing, you are to listen and see if he baas naturally or baas as the signal says, three times every three minutes. The same way if you hear a dog or cat, you are to make sure whether it is Stubby or Button or some strange dog or cat."

"That is all right for us, but what are we to do if we come to *our* trysting place and find no Nannie?" said Stubby.

"If I am hiding somewhere, I too will baa every three minutes. But if you don't hear me, you are all to begin hunting for me. For who knows but what a farmer with a big dog might come along and carry me off in his wagon so you could not follow my trail, or his dog chase me into some yard where I might be shut in?"

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"Never you fear, Nannie," said Stubby. "With my nose to scent you out and Billy's horns to butt both the dog and farmer into next week, we can't lose you. No, dearie; don't be afraid! Your dear husband isn't too old yet to rescue his little wife from dozens of farmers and their dogs."

"Oh, she will be for going around," spoke up Billy. "*Safety First* with her."

"You are right, Billy. I should prefer avoiding all danger where it is possible. Besides, it will take up much more time to go through the town than around it."

"Yes! But the fun and excitement we may miss!" replied Billy. "We are out for fun and adventures as much as to get to California."

"I have an idea!" exclaimed Button. "You go around the town, Nannie, while we go through it and we will meet you the other side, two miles from the limits, on the main road that runs due south. For there must be a road running in that direction to Chicago where we make our first turn to the West."

"An excellent idea, Button," declared Billy. "What say you, little wifey?"

"Yes, I think it a good plan, for I hate excitement and crowds and hubbub. All of which you three adore and would rather be in than not."

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And so it was decided that Billy, Stubby and Button should go through the town and Nannie around it, meeting them the next day at noon. But should they not appear by the day after she was either to wait for them another day or come back and find what had happened to them. So they all rubbed noses together, their way of kissing, and baaing, barking and meowing good-bys and wishing good luck to each other, they separated, Nannie going to the west to circle the town and Billy, Stubby and Button following the railroad that led through the center of the town.

Had they known what was in store for them, they would not have kissed good-bys so cheerfully, I'm thinking.

CHAPTER II

BILLY WHISKERS, STUBBY AND BUTTON VISIT THE COUNTY FAIR



UST as Billy, Stubby and Button were about to continue down the railroad track, Billy chanced to glance to the east and there he saw a cluster of long buildings that looked like barns and great open grandstands roofed over like baseball and football grounds and all enclosed with a high board fence. But what attracted him most was the number of flags, banners and pennants he saw waving from hundreds of flagpoles.

"Gee, fellows! That looks interesting to me, for those flags tell me there must be a County Fair going on over there, as this is the time of year they always have a big Fair. And I can well remember the one I went to when I was quite young. I never had such an enjoyable, exciting time in my life. What say you that we postpone going into the town and go over to the Fair instead?"

"Fine, just fine! I would like it above everything, for I haven't been to one for years. I, like you, remember the time I was there, only I was such a little puppy that I was under everybody's feet and was nearly run over several times, until at last my little master

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took me up in his arms and carried me. But I have always thought I should like to go back and see what it was like when I was old enough to take care of myself."

"As for me," replied Button, "I am ready for anything, just so I get something to eat pretty soon, for I am as hungry as a hedgehog."

"That settles it!" said Billy. "And I can promise you the best things to eat and plenty of them. The country women bring all their good things to the Fair to contest for prizes, from the best roast chickens, cured hams all roasted and garnished with cloves stuck in them to make them tasty, to pickles and jellies of all sorts. As for pies, they would just melt in your mouth. But I forget you don't care for jelly and spices. Very well then, there is a dairy exhibit where you can bathe in cream, there is so much of it."

"Come along, come along! The very sound of cream makes my mouth water."

The Chums soon arrived at the fairgrounds and it being so early, the only ones going in were the owners of exhibits and the men to feed and water the live stock, chickens, geese and ducks that were on exhibition. They watched their chance and slipped in when no one was looking, Billy walking in under a load of hay while Button rode in on a pole sticking out from the hay load and Stubby trotted in



BILLY AND NANNIE WERE ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BULL, STICKING THEIR LONG HORNS INTO HIM.

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fearlessly as if he belonged to a man driving a wagon full of milk cans.

Once in, they hid under the seats of the grandstand until they laid their plans—what they would do, where they would go and where they would meet.

“There is no use of our trying to keep together,” said Billy, “for if we do we will be stoned and clubbed and have no fun, so I say we separate and each amuse himself in the way he likes best, but that we all meet the other side of the town where we are to join Nannie.”

“The plan suits me to a tee,” said Button.

“And me too,” said Stubby.

“I think the first thing I will do will be to look up that dairy you were speaking of,” said Button.

“As for me,” replied Stubby, “I shall smell out those roast chickens and ducks. Where do you plan to go first?”

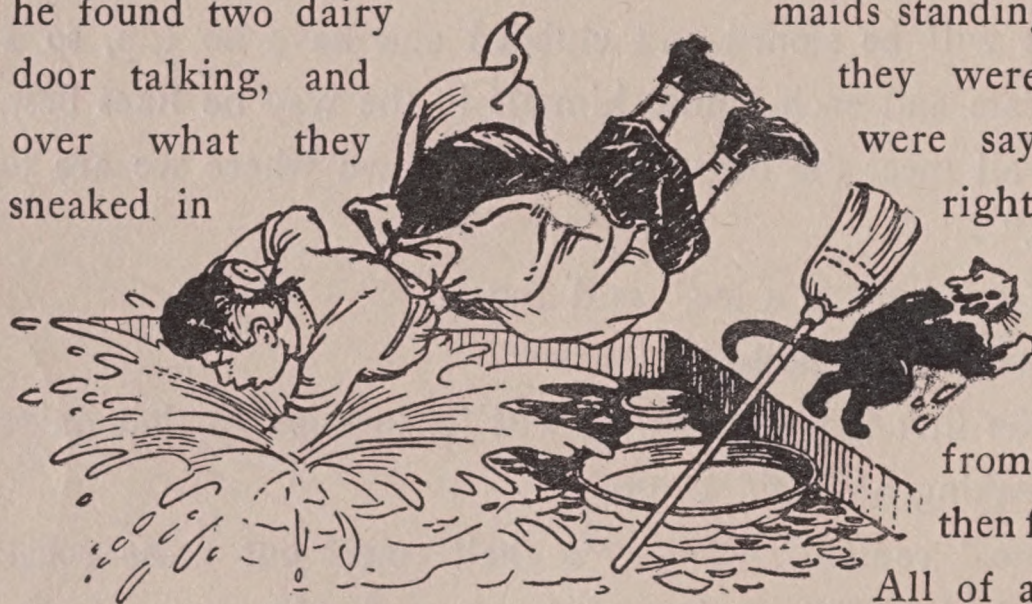
“I was just thinking I would go over to the fat stock show and while I looked around for old friends I would incidentally eat up some of the corn and oats that had been given to them. There is sure to be plenty left as their owners will be stuffing them to keep them fat.”

“Geel! Look at the crowd pouring in. And it is so early. We

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better get started before the crowd is so great we can't get near anything. *Au revoir*, fellows, until we meet again! And be sure you turn up at the trysting-place!" And with a whirl of his tail Billy was off, running under the seats toward the fat stock exhibit.

Button followed him for a way, then he spied the dairy building to his left and made a bee line for it. When he reached the door, he found two dairy maids standing in the open door talking, and they were so excited over what they were saying that he sneaked in right beside them and was lapping the cream first from one pan and then from another.



All of a sudden one of them turned round and seeing Button, she gave such an outlandish scream that it startled him and he fell headlong into the pan. In a minute he came out dripping, cream streaming into his eyes so he could not see. In his endeavor to get away, he fell into another as there were several pans cooling in a vat of ice-water. One of the maids grabbed up a broom and came for him. He jumped straight toward her and as she dodged him she slipped and fell into the vat of

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cold, cold water, upsetting every pan in the vat. Button landed on the floor and the jar shook the thick cream from his eyes so he could see. And you just better believe it did not take him long to escape. He had his fill of cream for once.

On his way to the fat cattle, Billy chanced to pass a pastry show and the delicious odor of hot molasses cakes floated to his nostrils through the open door.

"Oh my! Don't those cookies smell good? I shall just have to have some for I haven't had any old-fashioned molasses cookies for ages and I adore them. I also smell pumpkin pie which I like just as well. Guess I'll just tarry here a while and eat some. Think they would taste better than corn or oats at this particular time. How I wish Nannie was not so timid! Then she would be here so she could get some, for I know she adores molasses cookies. If that big fat cook doesn't stop standing in that doorway wasting his time, I shall have to butt him out while I go in and eat what I want. There, he is moving, and I smell something burning. Serves him right when he neglects them and wastes his master's time and money standing at the door instead of attending to business. But 'It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good' for now he will be so busy looking after his things that he won't see me helping myself."

When Billy arrived at the front door, the cook was disappear-

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ing out the back door with the pan of burned cookies, mumbling to himself:

"Gott in himmel! See what happens to me when I just step to the door for one breath of air! My Gott! My Gott! Mr. Swabenschbach will kill me for wasting his butter und eggs und sugar und flour."

"Yes, and he will feel like beating you to a jelly when he sees what has happened to his pies, for I have already tasted four different kinds," thought Stubby.

Just then the cook returned, still muttering to himself. But when he saw Billy up on a table eating a pie and several others ruined by being trampled upon he nearly fell backward in alarm. Then with a roar like a bull he started for Billy, throwing his empty cookie pan at him. He threw it so hard that when it hit Billy's sharp horns, they made two holes in it and it stuck to Billy's head and slipped half over one eye. Billy immediately jumped to the floor, hitting the pan a bang on the side of the table and completely covering one eye. This made Billy angry and when he saw the cook approaching him with a long-handled soup boiler in his hand, Billy turned and, running between the short fat legs of the cook, he upset him, sending hot soup all over him, for it turned upside down on his head and spilled carrots, turnips and potatoes all over him. Billy ran out the back door and jumped a fence

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which brought him into a chicken yard. As he went over, the cookie pan on his head hit the fence in just such a way that it knocked it off his horns, much to Billy's delight.

His arrival in the chicken yard caused a fresh commotion as it surprised the fowls so they flew in all directions and set up a loud cackling which brought the owner to see what was the matter. When he spied Billy he thought one of the prize goats had escaped from the cattle show, so hurried over there to tell them their goat was in his chicken yard. A man with a rope came back with him to capture Billy, never even stopping to see whether or not one of their goats had disappeared.

But when they returned not a goat was to be seen or a chicken either, for that matter, as the chickens had coaxed Billy to butt down the fence so they could escape and he had done so. And the minute it was down, the chickens in the yard flew and ran through the opening out into the fair grounds and made for the outside fence.

Billy hurried away from this scene of mishaps and as he was now nearly to the fat stock pavilion, he decided to follow the crowd a way and see where all the people were going. He soon discovered that they were on their way to the race track to see a game of auto polo.

"Gee, I bet that will be exciting! As I never saw one, I think I will stop and watch it for awhile."

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Around the field, in and out, went the small polo autos after the ball. It was the most exciting thing he had ever watched and he wondered how in the world the players were not all killed, for the autos turned upside down, collided, skidded and ran head-on into each other. But after each mishap the men seemed to get up, shake a little dust off their clothes, wipe the dust from bleeding noses, and go right on with the game.

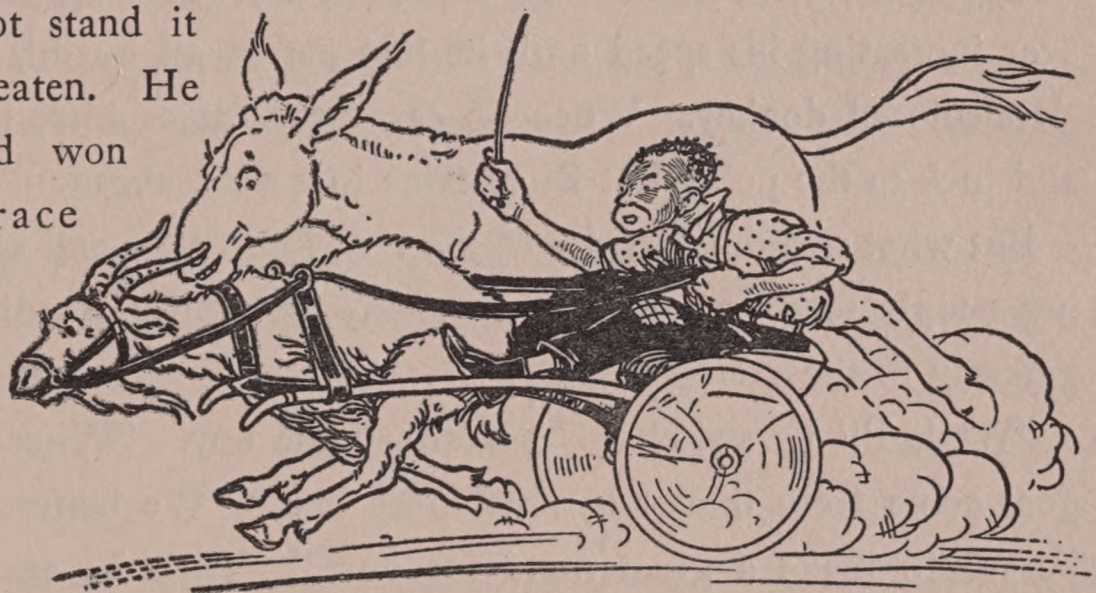
He was wildly excited and was watching with straining eyes a brilliant player when a heavy hand was laid on him and a gruff voice said: "Here you, old fellow, come along with me! You have caused all the trouble you are going to since your escape. And don't you know it is almost time for your race around this ring in the donkey and dog race?"

"Gee! He takes me for some goat that is down to run a race with some donkeys and dogs, I take it. Well, I am game! I'll go along and race to suit him. And I bet on myself to win that race."

Billy was right. That was just what the man wanted of him, and with little preliminaries Billy was led to the starting place and hitched to a little racing sulky that a little darkey boy was to drive. Near by he saw two little donkeys, two big dogs and one goat hitched to sulkies like the one to which he was being harnessed.

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He was led into the ring, the others were led up also and all of them stood in line. Then a bell rang, and they were off. It had been a long time since Billy had been in a race. Being out of practice running, he was left behind at first as his legs felt stiff and he was a little out of breath. But his pride got the better of his short breath and stiffness when he saw they were all ahead of him. He could not stand it to be beaten. He who had won every race



he ever had been in. Oh, no! He would show them he was not too old and stiff to beat them. This was to be a three-lap race, which gave him encouragement.

"They can have their first lap; I'll have my second wind and all my stiffness will be gone on the second. Besides the ones who start off the briskest often come in last."

"Here, Billy, what is the matter with you? You must be sick to

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lag so on this race. Get a move on you or your rival, the slate-colored donkey, will beat you!" urged the boy that was driving him, never doubting that our Billy was the goat he had always driven.

With a bound forward that nearly threw the boy off his seat, Billy started on a mad run. Off he went, rounding corners and ever increasing his speed until he had passed all but his rival, the slate-colored donkey. When he came abreast of him, it was nip and tuck to the poles, but Billy came in a neck ahead.

But what was the surprise of the boy, his keeper and all the racing people to see another goat exactly like Billy standing in the gateway to the racing ring!

"Well, I'll be switched!" exclaimed the boy. "Where did that goat come from that is so much like ours? We better nab him; he would make a great mate for ours." Then he attempted to take hold of the collar on Billy's neck, expecting to find the collar their goats always wore, but there was none. His surprise was unlimited, and he called to a man standing near their goat to feel for the collar and there it was.

"Well, I'll be hanged! If I haven't driven a strange goat and never known it was not our own!"

Everyone thought it was the strangest thing they had ever heard of and many followed the boy and Billy into the yard where he

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was unharnessed and then led away and tied up with some other goats and sheep.

They had just left him alone when whom should Billy see but Stubby sticking his head through a hole in the fence near him.

"Billy, I came to congratulate you on the race. I never saw a prettier one, but my heart was in my mouth for awhile, you were so long getting started. And now what are you going to do? Here you are tied up and it is time we were going on or Nannie will be looking for us."

"Why, I am going to start in a few minutes, just as soon as they give me a drink and I eat a bite or two. I am rather tired and thirsty from my race."

"But you are tied and they won't untie you for a while, I can tell you."

"Oh, Stub, you make me tired at times! Especially when you think any old rope will keep me from escaping. Here comes my drink of water. Vamoose to the other side of the fence and as soon as I have eaten and drunk my fill I will baa and then you crawl under the fence and come and help me chew this rope in two."

"All right, I will," barked Stubby.

After twenty minutes Stubby, who was about to fall asleep, heard Billy baa and under the fence he went. Within a very short time they had chewed in two the rope that held Billy and he had run

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to the fence where he butted a couple of boards off to make a hole big enough for him to crawl through. No one noticed his escape, for at that time of the day that part of the grounds was almost deserted.

Billy and Stubby proceeded toward town and they decided to sleep outside the village that night, and not go in until morning.

CHAPTER III

WHAT BEFELL THE CHUMS WHILE IN TOWN



WHEN they did go in the town they found the inhabitants were just getting up to breakfast, for they could smell bacon and potatoes frying and coffee boiling as they passed the houses. There were few people on the streets as yet so the Chums could go wherever they wished without being molested. But the odor of bacon and fried potatoes was so tempting to Stubby and Button and made them so hungry that they declared their intention of having breakfast before they traveled further. This food did not appeal to Billy but fresh lettuce and carrots with dew on them did, so he proposed that Stubby and Button try to get some bacon and potatoes while he jumped some garden fence and feasted on fresh vegetables until Stubby barked the signal for them all to move on.

But alas, these plans were made only to be broken.

Billy soon came to a house with a beautiful garden in front in which were climbing roses and many other kinds of flowers, while

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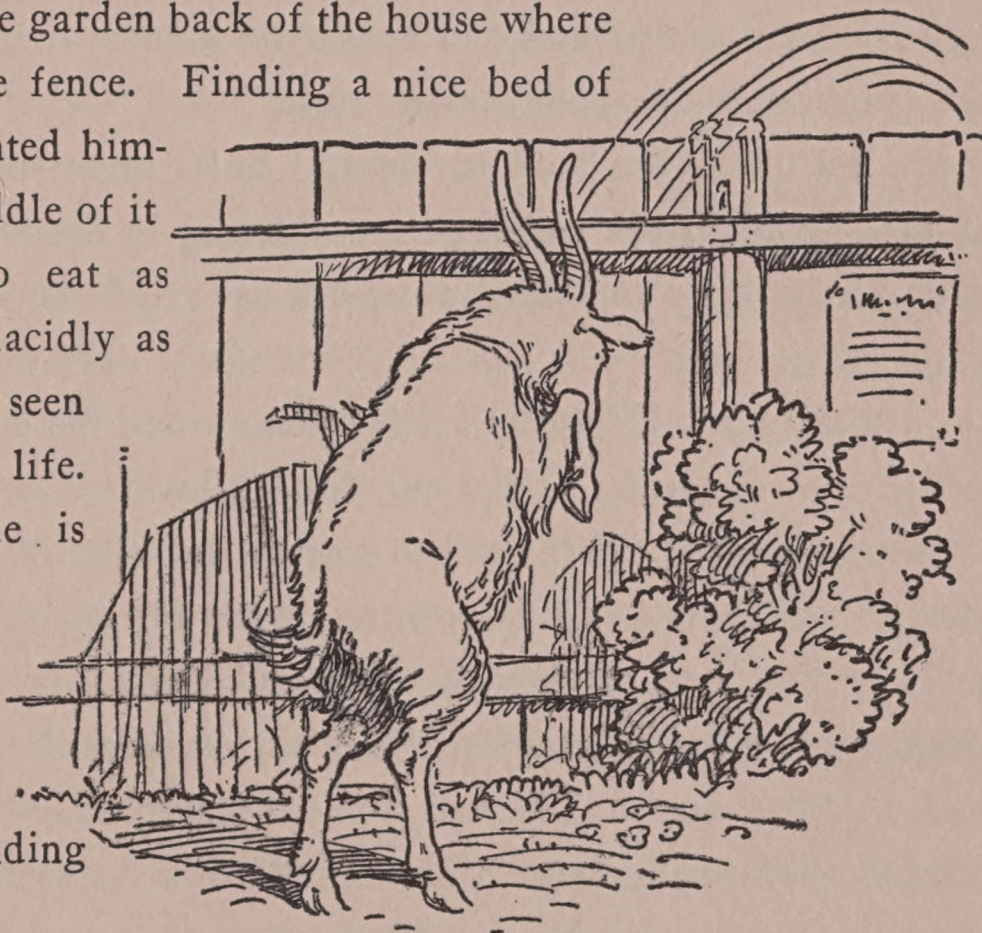
at the back was a big vegetable garden. On the way to the garden he nibbled off the fragrant, sweet tasting, full blooming red roses, taking care not to let the thorns prick him.

"Well, I declare!" said Billy to himself, "I never knew roses were so deliciously sweet and tasty before. Why, they are better eating than carrots or lettuce! The only trouble is that I can't get a big mouthful at a time on account of having to look out for the thorns. Gee, I am caught in the bush! Wish I hadn't tried to reach that big red rose on the topmost branch. I have gotten myself all tangled up. I know that rosebud looks very pretty in my beard and the one behind my left ear is equally jaunty and fetching, but jumping cats! those old thorns do scratch my sides like the dickens."

Just then "Bow-wow, Bow-wow, Bow-wow!" barked a big dog at his back. The dog had sneaked up so suddenly and quietly behind Billy that he had not heard a sound. The first "Bow-wow" startled him so that he gave a bound out of the rosebush, leaving bunches of hair pulled out of his sides and strands of long hair pulled out of his beard. Encouraged by his jump, the dog thought Billy was afraid, so ran after him. But by this time Billy had recovered from his surprise and instead of continuing to run he whirled quickly and faced the dog. This move was so unexpected to the dog that he ran full force into Billy before he could stop himself and there they stood for a second, nose against nose. Being quick-witted, Billy re-

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covered from his surprise first and before you could say Jack Robinson he had butted the dog head over heels out into the middle of the road. He picked himself up and went yelping home with his tail between his legs. And Mister Billy proceeded on his way to the vegetable garden back of the house where he jumped the fence. Finding a nice bed of lettuce, he planted himself in the middle of it and began to eat as quietly and placidly as if he had never seen a dog in his life. And while he is eating lettuce, we will see what luck Stubby and Button had finding a breakfast.



As soon as Billy left them they separated, one going on one side of the railroad track, the other on the other side. Then they ran along in front of the houses, smelling to find a place where they were cooking meat or potatoes. Stubby had run around to the

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back of a house where he had thought he smelled fried potatoes but what was his joy as he passed the kitchen window to smell the delicious odor of fried beefsteak as well as potatoes.

"Here is the place for me," thought Stubby to himself. "I'll stay right here until someone opens the kitchen door, then I shall sneak in and grab some of that steak."

He hid under the back porch, and as he impatiently waited, he could smell the steak and hear it sputtering in the frying-pan until he was so hungry and wanted a piece of it so badly that he felt he could eat the whole cow instead of one steak. He was losing hopes of anyone ever opening the kitchen door when the cook did so and left it open to let the smoke out, for while she was in the dining-room the potatoes had burned to a crisp and filled the kitchen with smoke. While she and her mistress were fussing over the burned potatoes, Stubby slipped in the door under cover of the smoke and jumped up on the table where the steak was on a platter ready to be served. With one grab he had it in his mouth and was running out the door before they saw him. Then with a scream of rage and surprise, the cook grabbed a broom and gave chase. Stubby ran down the railroad track and then dodged into a back yard and crawled under a fence into an alley and ran until he came to an empty packing box leaning on its side. Into this he dodged and dropped the meat to rest his jaws while he stuck his head around

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one side of the box to see if the cook was still pursuing him. Through a crack in the fence opposite the box he caught a glimpse of her still running down the railroad track with a broom waving in mid-air and crying, "Stop thief! Stop thief!" So he knew she had lost him for good, and with a sigh of relief and contentment he lay down by the steak and began to eat it hurriedly. It seemed to him he had never tasted anything so good in all his life.

He was just about gorged and feeling sorry he could not eat it all, it was so good, when who should stick his head around the box and peer in but Button.

"For mercy sakes! What are you doing here?" asked Button.

"Can't you see?" replied Stubby.

"Looks to me as if you had been stuffing yourself on beefsteak."

"I have, and you are just in time to save me from killing myself by over-eating. Come on and finish it for me."

"Think I will, but I can't eat much as I have just dined on roast goose."

"Roast goose for breakfast! Who ever heard of *goose* for breakfast?"

"No one, I guess. This goose was not for breakfast. It was for dinner, but the cook had roasted it so she would not have to watch it so closely when all her other things were on the fire. Then just before they were done she had intended putting this back in the

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

oven and finish browning it. They are having a birthday party there to-day. She had put this on the window sill to cool and I saw it so I just jumped up on the sill, ate my fill and escaped without being seen. Gee, won't she be mad when she finds what has happened? She will think a rat ate it."

"My, what Billy and Nannie miss in the way of eating by being vegetarians! I really can't see how they stand it," remarked Stubby.

"Well, I have eaten all I can. I wish we had pockets in our skins so we could carry what is left for future use when we have no way of getting a morsel of meat," said Button. "But as we can't, don't you think we better be moving on to find Billy?"

So they left the remains of the steak and continued down the alley. As they emerged, they looked down the street which faced the yard where Billy had feasted in the garden and they saw him running out of the yard, chased by a big fat cook with a dipper of hot water, a gardener with a rope, and a coachman with a long whip. But the Chums could see that Billy had such a good start that there was no likelihood of their catching him.

Then things began to happen. The cook stubbed her toe and fell flat. The gardener ran into a clothes-line which caught him under the chin and threw him back ten or fifteen feet. The coachman on seeing this ran back toward the stable. Then Stubby looked for Billy to come to them in the alley. He saw the three men standing

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there laughing to see the fat cook try to get on her feet again and the gardener go reeling off, holding his hands to his neck. At this moment the coachman appeared on a bicycle and, spying them, he made straight for them. Before they could get out of his way he was slashing them right



and left with his long lashed whip, calling to them in an angry voice: "Take that, will you, you

old garden thief!"

But he had a chance to beat each only once for Stubby crawled under the alley fence and Button ran up the fence and jumped down the other side, while Billy ran on, then stopped suddenly so the man would hit him and he would pitch head foremost off his wheel.

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This is just what happened. The wheel struck Billy, who was braced for it, and over the handle bar flew the coachman.

While he was picking himself up, Billy ran out of the alley and baaed for Stubby and Button. They answered, and soon the Chums were together again, hurrying down the railroad track.

CHAPTER IV

BILLY HAS AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE



HE two Chums ran down the sidewalk until they saw the outskirts of the town ahead of them and it being too early to meet Nannie, they decided to separate at the next street and go into the business part of the town and see what kind of a place it was.

"I see a good looking yellow cat down the street I am going to talk to," said Button.

"Very well," replied Billy. "If I don't see you again, be sure and be at the trysting-place by six o'clock this evening."

"What are you going to do?"

"I don't know yet. I haven't made up my mind."

And he never had a chance to make up his mind for at that moment a coat was thrown over his head from behind and many hands grabbed him. Ropes were slipped around his neck and legs and thus, half hobbled and half pulled, he was dragged up a short pair of steps into a barber shop, where amid much laughter which seemed to come from five or six throats, he was lifted and pulled into

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a barber's big chair. Here he was securely held so he could not move a muscle and then the coat was taken from off his head and he found himself sitting in a barber's chair before a glass with five big strong young boys around him laughing in his face.

And the ringleader spoke up and said: "Now, Tony, get to work and fix him up as I gave you directions!"

It seems these were college boys who were out for a lark and they were looking for a white goat when they chanced to see Billy. What they were up to was to catch a goat and shave him so his beard would be the same shape as that worn by one of the professors at the college whom they detested. He had a long face and pale blue eyes with the expression of a girl, so they were sure they could fix Billy up and dress him in the professor's clothes so he would be taken for the professor himself in a semi-darkened place.

They wished to play a joke on the Junior class. The class had been up to some mischief and no one knew of it but these Seniors and they decided to make the Juniors believe that the professor knew all about it and was about to expel them. So they proposed to dress Billy up as the professor and tie him in a chair at a desk in the recitation room, and then tell the Juniors that the professor wished to see them there at nine o'clock.

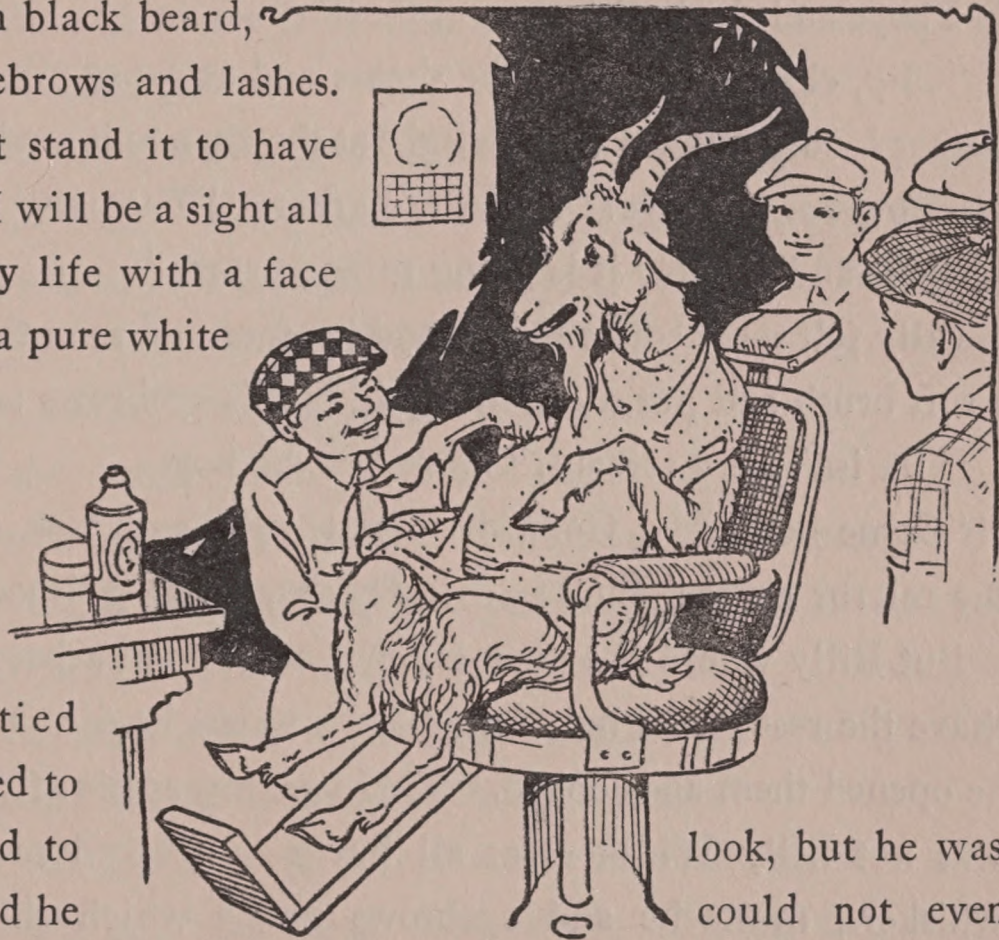
"All ready, Tony! First cut his beard into a long point, then trim his hair on the side to look like side whiskers, and fix the hair

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

on his upper lip to look like a long mustache. Then dye them all black but leave the rest of his face white. And oh yes, blacken his eyebrows and lashes!"

"Heavens, what am I to do to get loose? Think what I will look like with black beard, mustache, eyebrows and lashes. I really can't stand it to have them do it. I will be a sight all the rest of my life with a face like that and a pure white back."

Poor Billy!
He tried to open his mouth to baa, but it was tied shut. He tried to move his head to so securely tied he



look, but he was could not even turn his head one inch. Then he tried to kick, but his hind legs were tied together and his forelegs bound to the arms of the chair. He was absolutely helpless! He closed his eyes and wept for Billy was very proud of his size and good looks and to be a laughing-stock to

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every person that laid eyes on him hereafter was too much for his strong spirit to stand. So I know you won't blame him if he wept for once in his life. But he promised himself that when he did get loose that he would spend the rest of his life getting even with those five boys and the barber.

"Clip, clip, clip!" went the shears and at every clip the boys and barber loudly howled with delight at the change it made in Billy.

"Now for the dye!" said the barber. "That will complete the likeness and I know it is going to be perfect."

Billy felt some cold stuff around his face and soon the barber took a soft brush and put the cold liquid on his eyebrows and lashes.

"Oh, isn't he a scream?" chuckled the boys.

"Come now, Mr. Goat, open your eyes and look at yourself in the mirror before you," said the barber as he finished his job.

But Billy would not open his eyes until the barber threatened to shave the rest of the hair off his back unless he did open them. So he opened them and looked. There gazing at him from the mirror was not Billy Whiskers at all but a long-faced man with black whiskers, mustache and eyebrows under which shone two blue eyes which grew larger and larger as he stared at the face in the mirror. But where was he? For surely that black-bearded person was not Billy Whiskers! No amount of dye could change a goat to look so like a man. He was so taken by surprise that he just

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sat and stared and stared at the reflection, while the boys fell over one another in fits of laughter and clapped each other on the back and howled with delight.

"Here, Tony, is five dollars for you for doing such a wonderful job. Now where shall we hide him until it gets dark enough to lead him to the college?"

"I'll put him in my cellar until you come for him," said Tony.

"That will be fine! Give him plenty to eat and drink, for we don't want to starve or hurt him in the least, and we will let him go the minute the joke is played out. Good-by, Tony, good-by!" called the boys as they filed out of the barber shop.

Tony shut the outside door and then cautiously untied Billy—all but the rope around his neck. With this he led him to the cellar. Billy could have butted him easily and made his escape, but he was too disappointed to fight at that moment. Besides, he wished to go to some cellar or dark place and hide until the dye wore off his beard and he looked like himself again.

The barber led Billy to the cellar where he took the rope from his neck and left him in a large room while he went to get him something to eat and drink. When he came back he said: "Now, old fellow, you better eat and drink what I have brought you and then take a rest for if I am not mistaken you will have a wild night of it when once those Junior college boys find out a goat has been

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palmed off on them as the professor." So saying, he walked out and shut the door.

For a few minutes Billy lay still. Then he decided he better eat and drink if he was to be in trim to combat the boys. After he had eaten all he cared to and had a drink of good cold water, he felt so much better he said to himself: "I am a chump to give up like this! While there is life there is hope. I'll just look round this room and see if I can't find some window open or a rickety door I can butt down."

He walked around and around the cellar but found the windows were too high from the floor to jump through and the doors too heavy to butt down. But as he inspected the door he saw that it had an old-fashioned round knob for a handle.

"I have an idea," he said to himself. "If I wiggle that knob, it may turn the latch and I can open the door." And in a second Billy had that knob in his mouth and was twisting and twisting it in every direction to try and make the latch slip back. It would go half way, then when he could not turn his head any further, it would slip back. At last Billy grew angry, he grabbed the knob between his teeth and gave it a quick turn and lo and behold! the door flew open.

Well, it did not take Billy long to get out of that room and run

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down a long, dark hall until he came to a pair of steps that led up, he did not know where, but he expected into a hall that would eventually lead to some outside door. Anyway, he took the chance and mounted them. When he arrived at the top he heard someone coming and seeing a door standing ajar, he quickly pushed it open and stepped inside.

It was pitch dark in this room and the air felt damp and sultry. Billy stood perfectly still until the sound of footsteps died away. By this time his eyes had become accustomed to the darkness and he could distinguish small, long narrow windows five or six feet from the floor.



"Funny place for windows! And a queer room, I must say, with this heavy, damp air in it. It is so dark I'll walk cautiously over to one of those windows, stand on my hind feet and find what I can see through them."

Billy took two steps and found himself falling into inky blackness. Then he went kersplash! into deep water. He had fallen into a

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swimming tank. As this building was given over to Turkish bathrooms, barber shops and so on, Billy had fallen into the swimming tank, that was all. In a minute or two he realized where he was and he began swimming around to find some place to get out of the water. At last at one end he found a long board running down into the water to the floor of the tank, put there for the little boys who went swimming to climb out. So up this board he went. Then he walked around the platform that surrounded the tank until he came to the door. Once there, he stood still and listened to find if he could hear anyone coming, but all was still. He poked his head out the door and feeling a draft, he stepped out into the hall and ran along searching the cause of the draft, which led him to an outside door as he had supposed it would. It opened into a long back yard which ended on an alley. And just as he left the building, he heard the voices of the five boys as they came in the front door after him. He had made his escape none too soon. And as he leaped the back yard fence into the alley, who should he nearly land on but Stubby.

"Well, this is luck! But come on, Stub, don't stop to ask any questions now for there are five boys on my trail this minute!" With a whirl of their tails, the two Chums disappeared down the alley.

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When they stopped running, Billy said to Stubby: "Thank you for not laughing at my appearance. You are a true friend, Stub."

"But why should I laugh at your appearance? You look just the same to me."

"Look just the same? Come, Stub, that is going too far with friendship! How can you say I look just the same with my beard and eyebrows dyed black?"

"Beard and eyebrows dyed black! Are you crazy, Billy, or what is the matter with you? Your beard is no blacker than it ever was. You must be blind to think so."

Billy now cast his eyes down at his long beard and, sure enough, it was white as snow, just as it always had been.

"Could I have dreamed it all?" thought Billy. "No, for I am as wet as a rat from my swim in the tank." Then the thought came to him: "The water must have washed off the dye. But who ever heard of dye coming off in one washing of cold water?"

Billy never had, but what had been put on Billy was not a regular dye, but only some coloring matter that actors and actresses use when they wish to change from blond to brunette. It is a perfectly harmless preparation and washes off easily.

When Billy realized he was looking his old self, he began to caper around and baa with joy until Stubby thought he must have

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taken leave of his senses. But when he stopped skipping around and told Stubby how the barber had fixed him up, Stubby said he would have given up his luncheon to have seen him, especially when Nannie and Button had their first glimpse of him.

CHAPTER V

BILLY HAS ANOTHER EXCITING EXPERIENCE



BILLY and Stubby continued down the alley together until they came to a corner drug store. Here they separated, Stubby going down the side street and Billy going inside to get some gumdrops he saw displayed in the window.

Before going in, he looked through the window to be sure there was no one in sight, then he cautiously sneaked in the open door. By a coil of cigar smoke he saw rising from behind a partition where he knew the prescription desk was, he thought the proprietor must be putting up some medicine. As for the man who belonged at the soda fountain, he could see him talking to two young ladies in an auto outside to whom he had just served chocolate sodas.

"My! That foamy chocolate soda looks good and makes me thirsty! I think before I eat my gumdrops I'll just step behind the soda fountain and see if he has left any setting round."

Of course he had not, but what Billy saw that looked quite as good to him were several small boxes of little pink and yellow cakes standing up before some bottles on a shelf.

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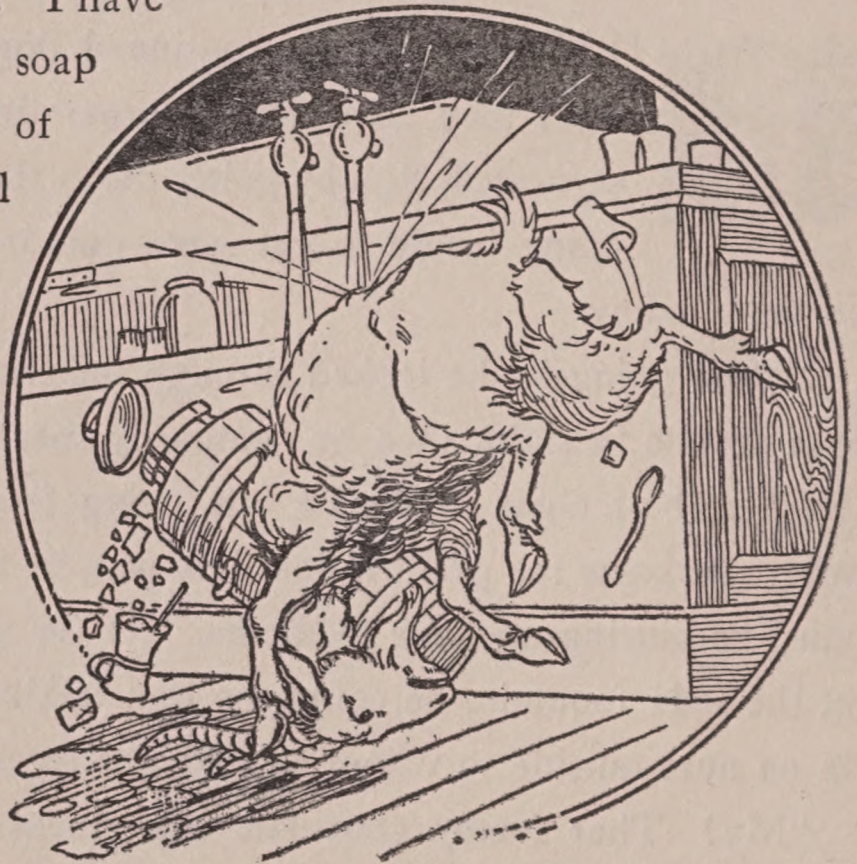
"Me for the cakes before I get my drink!" And Billy slipped his tongue around one of the pink cakes and before he knew it, it had slipped down his throat, leaving a nasty taste in his mouth and causing a thick foam to fill his mouth and throat.

"Horror of horrors! I have swallowed a cake of soap instead of one made of flour. Whatever shall I do to get the taste out of my mouth?"

Just then he spied a tub of water in which they washed the soda water glasses, and he hurried to it and began taking long gulps. But alas! the more he drank, the

more foam came up into his mouth until he was nearly strangled and he felt quite ill.

"Oh! Oh! I must get outdoors immediately, I feel so sick." And instead of running around the counter, he tried to jump over it, thinking it would be the shorter way. Alas, alack! His horns



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hit the spigot that turns the fizz into the soda water glasses and in a second Billy was blinded by the flying, sizzling fluid. It went in his ears, eyes, nose and mouth and for a minute or two he did not know which way to turn. In his blindness he turned the wrong way and instead of going toward the door, he landed behind the counter again, upsetting the ice-cream freezer and sending the ice and salt over the floor and knocking the lid off the can in which the ice-cream was packed.

At this critical moment the man came out from behind the partition to see what the racket was and the clerk who had served the sodas to the ladies came in also. As he went behind the counter he was met by a big billy goat foaming at the mouth. Of course he thought him a mad goat and he began to cry: "Mad goat! Mad goat! Look out, everybody!" and he ran out the door calling this as loudly as he could.

The ladies in the machine hearing the cry and seeing the man running from the store started the machine, but not before the man crying "Mad goat! Mad goat!" had had time to jump on their running board and tell them to "Drive on, drive on!"

Just as they started, Billy came running out of the drug store foaming at the mouth and close behind him the proprietor of the store, a broom held high over his head to chase Billy. But just as he reached the front door he stepped on a piece of ice from the ice-

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

cream freezer and both feet slipped out from under him. He shot out the door and down the steps, landing beside Billy at the edge of the sidewalk, where poor Billy was coughing up great puffs of foam. At last up came what was left of the cake of soap and Billy soon felt relieved.

The proprietor of the store, on seeing this, knew that Billy was not mad but only sick and this provoked him so that he raised his broom to hit Billy. Now Billy was in no mood to be beaten, so when the broom came down on his back he turned to chase the man, who ran back into the store with Billy after him.

Back of the counter ran the man and when he rounded the corner he slipped again on the ice-cream that was now running out of the freezer. He slid along on the end of his backbone about five feet when he came up against the tub of water, upsetting it all over him, while Billy, who had jumped up on the counter, stood watching him.

"You squint-eyed, pig-tailed, crooked-legged old goat! I'll break every bone in your body if I ever catch you, for causing all this mess!"

But while he was getting up Billy jumped from the counter and was about to run out the door when whom should he run into but a squad of policemen who had come in the ambulance to capture the mad goat the soda fountain man had reported was running wild.

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Billy never faltered a minute. He and all policemen were sworn enemies, so before they knew what had happened to them, he had butted each one over on the grass or into the gutter and was off down the street. And when Billy turned to see if they were following, he saw them all piling into the ambulance preparatory to starting for him. But Billy had too much of a start for them to overtake him. He was just thinking of leaving the town to go to meet Nannie when he heard a terrible racket down an alley he was about to cross. Just before he reached it out ran Stubby with a tin can full of stones tied to his tail, chased by five or six hoodlums each with a stick in his hand.

On seeing them Billy said: "So that is your game, is it? I'll teach you not to tie a tin can on a dog's tail and then chase him and beat him when he has done nothing to you. Well, I'll show you how it feels to be hurt and, what is more, I will give you full measure, so you and the rest of your gang will never tie another can to a dog's tail again."

Then he baaed to Stubby: "I'll take care of this gang. You go chew the rope off your tail and I will be back and help you the minute I have butted every one of those boys into the middle of next week."

The largest and foremost of the boys was about to strike Billy

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when, my, Oh my! what was the matter with his back? It hurt him so he felt it must be broken and here he was flying skyward as fast as he could go! Had he been blown up by a bomb or was a mad bull trying to kick him over the moon? Surely a goat could not butt one like that.

And while he was thinking this, Billy was chasing the other boys down the alley as all had taken to their heels when they saw their leader going skyward after Billy butted him. One boy jumped over the fence into a yard and climbed a tree; another climbed up on the roof of a shed; a third jumped into a milk wagon that was standing in the alley, while a fourth ran through a yard and into a kitchen where he saw the door open. This one Billy followed straight into the kitchen and when the boy saw Billy still pursuing him, he ran upstairs and jumped in bed and pulled the covers over his head.

After butting the fat cook down the cellar stairs when she tried to stop him, Billy followed the boy upstairs and leaped on the the bed, butting and kicking him until he cried for mercy. After a few minutes of this, thinking the boy had been punished enough, Billy jumped out the open window on to a low shed roof and from there to the ground. Then he hurried into the alley again to hunt up the other boys, for he had made up his mind he would punish them all. The next boy he saw was the one that had tried

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to get away from him by jumping into the milk wagon. All Billy had to do was to walk up to the horse and give him a slight hook in the stomach which startled him so he ran away. The boy was tossed around among the rattling milk cans like a pea in a pod, hurting his toes and giving him a bloody nose besides.

The next boy Billy came to was the boy in the tree. He tried to climb the tree but of course could not. So then he butted the tree until it shook so it knocked the boy out. When he tried to jump up and run away, Billy was after him and he chased him until he was within a few feet of his home. Billy spied a big hogshead of rainwater and into this he butted the boy and left him crying for help.

Now the only boy left was the one on the shed roof who had sat there and laughed as he watched Billy chasing the other boys. He had laughed until his sides ached and called to Billy to "give it to them, you old clummergeudgen!"

"Oh! You can laugh at your chums' misery, can you, you cowardly sneak," baaed Billy, "because you think you are safe? Now let us see which side of your mouth you will laugh on when you find I too can climb up on a shed roof."

Billy was right. This boy was the worst sneak and coward of the gang, so when he saw Billy coming up on the shed roof after him, his hair fairly stood on end and he yelled for help as if wild

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Indians were after him. But no one heard. The alley was deserted at this time of day. Billy chased him around and around the roof for some time, giving him little butts just to show him what a big butt would be like. Then when he got to the place on the roof where he wanted him, Billy gave him a mighty butt that sent the boy fifty feet off the roof out in a straight line over the cowyard fence where he dropped on a pile of manure. And here Billy left him and went to find Stubby.

When he reached the place where he had left Stubby, he found he was in good hands. A kind-faced lady with a big heart for hurt animals had picked



Stubby up in her arms and was carrying him home where she could cut the string around his tail and bathe the wound in warm water and witch hazel. The boys had tied the string on so tightly that she

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could not undo the knot, so was taking him home where she could get a pair of scissors and cut it off.

Billy followed them closely and waited until Stubby came out of her house with his tail wrapped up with a witch hazel bandage, and as he stood eating from a plate of food she had given him, Billy told him what he had done to his four boy tormentors.

"Thank you so much, Billy! But how I should have loved to have seen you butting them right and left and skyward! My, that is a nice lady who fixed my tail! I like her so much, I'd like to stay with her always if it were not for our trip west. And it seems mean to run away from her without saying good-by after she has been so good to me. But the best of friends must part some time. I am going to promise myself to come back and see her when we return from our trip. As soon as I have finished eating this delicious luncheon she has given me I will be ready to go with you to where Nannie is waiting for us."

CHAPTER VI

BILLY FINDS NANNIE IN BAD HANDS

UT when they reached the trysting-place, there was no Nannie. After waiting an hour, they decided something must have happened to her, as it was long past the time she should have been there. So they put their heads together and formed plans as to how to search for her.

Billy was to go to the right to a farmhouse whose chimneys he saw sticking up above the treetops to the right of the road. Stubby was to go round a big turn he saw to the left and Button was to stay there at the trysting-place in case Nannie came while they were away.

"I feel quite sure someone has caught her and tied her up somewhere," said Billy.

"So do I," replied Stubby. "But it won't take us long to rescue her when we once find her."

In the wiggle of a lamb's tail Billy disappeared from sight down a ravine and Stubby under some bushes on the other side of the road. When they had gone Button climbed up into a tree and fell asleep.

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It seemed to him he had been napping but a short time when he heard Billy and Nannie talking under the tree. Billy had gone straight to the stable yard of the farmhouse whose chimneys he had seen above the treetops and as he approached, he heard a goat moan as if in pain. He stopped short to listen. Could that be Nannie's voice? If so, and someone was hurting her, it would not be well for them. Again the hurt cry reached his ears. Yes, surely that was Nannie's voice! He redoubled his speed and arrived at the fence that enclosed the farmyard just as three boys were trying to hitch Nannie to a little milk wagon that had three cans of milk in it. When they buckled on the harness, they buckled in a piece of her flesh, but what cared they? This hurt so it made her moan. Then they struck her over the head for not standing still, and dear knows what else they *would* have done to her if Billy had not jumped over the fence with one bound and come to her rescue. One boy he butted into a watering trough and another over the garden fence where he landed in an asparagus bed. The last boy he butted straight through the open barn door, knocking over the hired man who was coming out with a pail of milk in his hand, upsetting it and spilling it all over the barn floor.

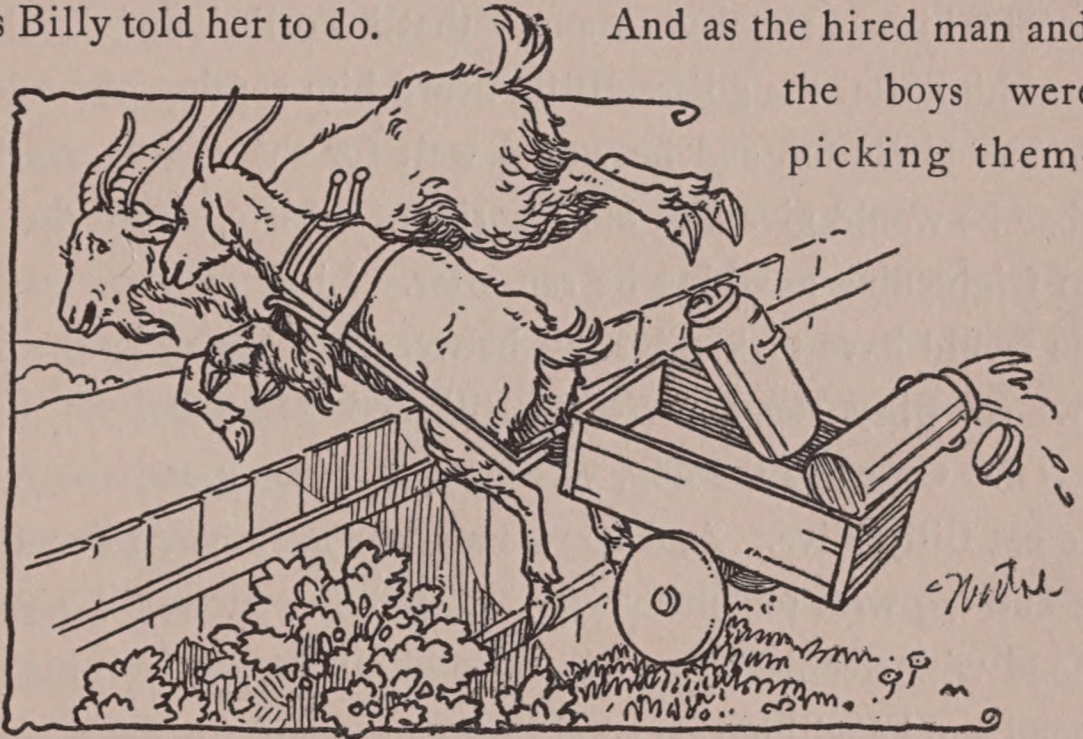
Then he turned to Nannie and said: "Now run for your life

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and jump the fence. When the wagon hits the fence it will break the traces and you will be free."

Being a good jumper, especially when frightened, Nannie did exactly as Billy told her to do.

And as the hired man and the boys were picking them-



selves up, they heard a crash. Looking in the direction from which the noise came, they saw Nannie and Billy jumping the four-rail fence as a steeplechase horse takes a fence. The traces broke and the little wagon, which had been pulled up on its hind wheels, toppled over and spilled out all the milk cans and the milk, while Nannie and Billy landed safely on the other side and ran for dear life to where Billy had left Button. Every once in a while Nannie

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would give a frightened look over her shoulder to see if the boys were following her, but she need have had no fear for the boys were too bruised to chance another butting.

The hired man was so angry that he called their bull dog and sent him after the goats. Billy heard him coming and told Nannie to run to Button and he would wait for the dog to overtake him, then he would give him the surprise of his life. This dog was used to frightening anything he ran after. Little did he know Billy or he would have tucked his tail between his legs and turned and ran home. Billy stood perfectly still and pretended he was eating grass. On came the dog, yelping and barking as if he were going to eat Billy alive. And he was a ferocious looking dog for he was a bulldog with undershot jaw. A few feet from Billy was a deep pond with steep sides so Billy thought, "I'll just butt him into that pond and he will have a good time getting out for the sides will give way and crumble in the minute he touches them."

"Bow-wow-wow!" barked the dog, showing his teeth as he jumped at Billy from a high bunch of long grass. Pang! went something flying through the air followed by a yowl of pain, and the dog landed in the middle of the pond and went straight down to the bottom.

When the hired man, leaning on the fence to watch his dog chew

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up Billy, saw this, he roared with rage, picked up a pitchfork which was handy and started for Billy. But when he reached the pond he found he had to give all his attention to his dog, else he would drown as the bank crumbled and gave way, carrying him back into the water every time he tried to climb out.

Billy ran on and soon the friends were all together for the man and his dog did not follow them. The Chums started on down the road that led away from the town and toward Chicago, for which place they were bound. They traveled straight down this road until midnight. Then they went into a woods beside the road to sleep and rest until morning, but Nannie scarcely closed her eyes, for she had become so frightened she could not sleep.

"My dear little wife," said Billy, "don't be afraid! I won't allow anything to hurt you. Come over here and sleep close to me so I can protect you."

So at last Nannie fell asleep, but it was almost worse than being awake for she had terrible dreams of being chased by bulldogs that bit pieces right out of her side as she tried to run away from them.

In the morning she felt as tired as if she had not slept at all, and the long journey ahead of her made her feel ill at the very thoughts of it, with its hardships and adventures. She thought of it all the morning and at noon she said to Billy: "My dear, I hope you won't

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be disappointed, but I have made up my mind that it will be better for all concerned if I return home and let you and Stubby and Button continue your trip without me."

"Why, Nannie! What do you mean? Are you going to desert us at the very beginning of our journey?" asked Stubby.

"Yes, Stubby. I feel I am getting too old to enjoy leaving my peaceful, quiet home, my children and grandchildren, to go roaming all over the continent just for the excitement and adventure. It may be all right for you unmarried ones, but for a grandmother, NO! I believe my place is at home and I am going to start back to-night before we are so far away I can't find my way."

All this time Billy had kept still and was watching Nannie to see how much of this she meant, and he was surprised to find that every word of it was in earnest. Then the thought flashed through his mind: "Perhaps she is right. She always has been a home-loving body and very timid, and I believe with her that this trip would be too much for her. I will go back with her to within sight of the farm so I shall know she reaches there safely. Then I shall come back and join Stubby and Button and we can continue our journey."

Nannie noticed Billy was very quiet and she was afraid to look at him for fear he would be angry at her for backing out. So she felt greatly relieved when she did look at him to find he was smiling at her and nodding his head for her to go.

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"You certainly are a darling, Billy, to let me have my own way in everything, but you need not escort me back home. I can find the way, and if I can't, I can call on the crows and blackbirds to show me the way."

"No, my dear; I shall feel better if I see you home—at least the other side of the village where the boy captured you. If we travel fast, I can join Stubby and Button here by day after tomorrow. And what is two days lost when one is not in a hurry and going away for a year?"

So they rested all that afternoon and just before dark Billy and Nannie started back to the old farm. They traveled rapidly until they came to a high hill that looked down on the old farm and the rolling country around it with its placid lake and wooded slopes on one side and the equally pretty country through which they had just passed on the other.

"Billy," said Nannie, "you need not come any farther with me. I can go on alone from here in perfect safety."

"Oh, I might as well go all the way with you."

"No, you need not, for it would only make you have to say good-bye to everybody again, a thing you hate to do."

"Very well, if you say so and if you feel all right about my leaving you here, I will. But I do so wish you were going with us! Every mile I have been traveling in bringing you back has made me

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feel more lonesome as it will be many months and perhaps a year before I see you again, and at our time of life we haven't as many years to be together as we once had, you must remember."

"Oh, Billy, don't talk that way or I shall turn right around and go back with you no matter how afraid I am of the unknown dangers I will have to pass through."

"No, no, dear! I would not have you go for worlds, if you were going to be afraid all the time. Now you start ahead and I will stand here and watch you out of sight."

"No, indeed, that is what *I* am going to do. I am going to wait here until you disappear over that farther hilltop."

"Oh, very well, if you wish it."

And with many, many rubbings of noses and sides in lieu of kisses, the two old lovers parted. Billy ran as fast as he could down the hill and Nannie strained her eyes to see him come out of the grove of trees at the bottom and begin to climb the hill. She could easily locate him by the white spot he made on the green landscape.

But what was the matter with her? Every time he disappeared her heart fluttered so she felt she would suffocate and the tears sprang to her eyes in such numbers that for a minute or two she could not see him when he did emerge from the bushes and trees that had hid him. And all too quickly he was approaching the top

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of that terrible hill where, when he once stepped over the top, she would not see him for—what had he said?—weeks, months and perhaps a year!

No, it must not, could not be! She knew it now by the flutter of her heart that fear, children or grandchildren could not keep her from following her own darling lover-husband. And with a long jump she was down the side of the hill, baaing for Billy to wait for her.

Poor timid, loving Nannie! Her love had cast out fear as it always does in life if we love enough. Nannie ran so fast that she did not look where she was going and she had many falls and turned many somersaults before she reached the top of the hill over which Billy had disappeared. And when she at last stood on the brow of the hill she expected to see him miles ahead of her. But what was her joy on reaching the crest to see him quietly drinking out of a little stream at the bottom.

“He has his back to me, so I will just creep up and surprise him,” she said to herself with joy in her heart that she had found him so soon, “and never, no, never will I leave him again of my own accord.”

After drinking all he cared to, Billy waded out into the middle of the stream where the water was deep, to let it wash over his back

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to clean his long hair. He was so busy with his bath that the first he knew of her presence was when he saw a shadow in the water beside him.

Can you appreciate his surprise when he looked up and saw his little Nannie whom he had thought so far away standing beside him?

"Why, Nannie, my darling, how you surprised me! When I saw your shadow I thought you were some animal that had waded into the stream for a drink. Whatever brought you back? Oh, I don't care what it was, so you are here, for I was so lonesome without you that I was about to turn back and coax you to come with us or stay behind myself."

"Were you really, Billy? How nice! Now I know you will feel all right when I tell you I have decided to go with you and never be separated from you again if I can help it."

"Have you really decided to do that, Nannie, and not just come to tell me something you forgot to say to me?"

"Indeed I never was more in earnest in my life! My fears are all gone, or rather they are as nothing to the lonesomeness I felt when I saw you going from me and I realized how long it might be before I saw you again."

"Hurrah! Hurrah for you, you sweet little wife of mine!"



HE SUCCEEDED IN LIFTING THE BRIDE INTO A CROTCH OF THE TREE, BUT BEFORE HE COULD CLIMB UP THE BULL WAS UPON HIM.

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and Billy began to prance around in the water so he nearly drowned her.

"My, but this water feels good and cool to me after my long hot run to catch up with you," said Nannie.

"Won't Stubby and Button be surprised when they see you come trotting back with me?"

"Yes, and they will think I am the biggest goose that ever lived."

"But a fine one at that, for both Stub and Button are very fond of you."

After Billy and Nannie left them, Button said to Stubby: "Well, what shall we do with ourselves while waiting for Billy's return?"

"I don't know," said Stubby, "but when I went over to that big barn you see the other side of the road, looking for Nannie, I met the cutest, curliest Saint Bernard puppy you ever saw. I guess I will go back and play with it awhile. And by the way, Button, I saw a spotted cat over there too, so you better come along with me and probably we can manage to pass away the time happily until Billy's return and get a good square meal or two besides."

When they came within a short distance of the big barn they saw the haymow door was open and on the ledge basking in the sun lay the spotted cat Stubby had seen when he was there before. She seemed to be eating something nice and juicy. "It must be a

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mouse," thought Button. When he got right under the door, he meowed: "Good-morning, Mrs. Spot!"

This so surprised the cat that she let fall from her mouth what she was eating and it fell at Button's feet and he discovered immediately that it was the head of a squab.

"Excuse me," meowed Button, "I did not mean to startle you. I thought you had seen me coming. Wait a minute and I will bring up to you this delicious morsel you have just dropped."

Not to be outdone in politeness, the spotted cat meowed back:

"Oh, no! Don't trouble yourself to bring it back. I have plenty more and if you would care to have some and will come up here, I can give you all you can eat."

"I am sure that sounds most alluring. I'll be right up if you will tell me how to get there."

"Wait a minute and I will come down and show you the way." And before Button expected her, the spotted cat crawled out of a hole from under the barn. Just then the cat saw Stubby for the first time and not knowing he was with Button, he spit and flew at him in a rage and would have scratched his eyes out before Stubby could have defended himself had not Button meowed:

"Don't touch him. He is my friend and won't hurt you. He only came over to visit the little puppy while I talked to you."

The spotted cat apologized most profusely and invited Stubby to

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join them at their feast of squab up in the hayloft. But when Stubby tried to squeeze through the hole under the barn he could not, so he was forced to stay outside with thoughts of having a whole squab dropped down to him from the loft.

"But how comes it that you have so many squabs to eat at one time?" asked Button.

"It happened in this way. As you



know, there is going to be a wedding here this afternoon and these squabs were raised to serve at the wedding feast. But the boxes their nests were made in, up in the pigeon loft just over our heads, broke loose and spilled out all the young squabs and no one knows it but me and the mother pigeons. Haven't you observed how excited the old pigeons are and how they keep flying in and out of the loft looking for their babies? My, but there will be a terrible commotion at the house when they discover that the squabs are gone. So come ahead and follow me. We must hurry and eat our fill before the people at the house discover their loss."

CHAPTER VII

WILD EXCITEMENT IN THE BARNYARD



HE spotted cat led Button under the floor of the barn until he came to a round hole in the floor that led to the main barn where the grain bins were. Through this hole they squeezed themselves and from there crossed the barn floor to a ladder that led up into the haymow.

Once in the hayloft they hurried over to the door that was directly under the window where the pigeons went in and out to their nests, but there on the hay, wriggling and crying, were the baby squabs who opened their mouths so wide they nearly fell over backwards when they heard the spotted cat and Button approaching. They thought every sound was their mothers coming to feed them.

"Now help yourself, Mr. Button. Pick out the plumpest, and fall to. But before we begin we better drag to the door a couple of squabs and drop them down to your friend."

Though their intentions were good, only trouble came from it, for just as the squabs fell from the open door, the farmer happened to be passing and they hit him on the head. This surprised him

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greatly and he immediately came running up into the hayloft to see what had happened to his squabs.

And there he found that a whole row of boxes which held the nests had fallen down from the upper window into the hay and spilled out nearly all of his nice fat squabs that were to be one of the delicacies at the wedding feast. This was bad enough, but it infuriated him to find a big stray cat and his own cat eating them up as fast as they could and he grabbed up a pitchfork that was sticking up in the hay and ran toward them.

Button saw by the angry gleam in his eye that he would as soon run the pitchfork into them as not, so he ran for the door, preferring to take the risk of having his neck broken by the fall to being run through with the pitchfork.

The loft was high—at least fifteen or eighteen feet from the ground—but Button took the leap without a moment's hesitation, not even casting his eyes down to see where he was going to land, for he had felt the prongs of the fork prick his tail as he left.

Imagine his surprise on landing to find himself sitting on the broad back of a big Durham bull! Also imagine the surprise of the bull at having a pincushion land on his back filled with pins that stuck into him when he was doing nothing but standing quietly in the yard!

Button had scarcely touched his back when the bull bounded for-

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ward. Of course this made Button stick his claws deeper into the hide of the bull to keep from falling off, and of course this hurt the bull and made him try to shake off whatever was on his back. He started around the yard on a run, jumping up and down and shaking himself, but no matter what he did the sharp prickling thing on his back stuck on.

Just then he spied a little dog coming around the corner of the barn. He hated dogs at any time and now being hurt and cross and looking for some person or animal to vent his spite on, he started for the dog who was no other than Stubby.

Seeing Button on the bull's back and the bull running around like mad, Stubby barked and ran up to the bull to try to drive him into a corner of the barnyard and keep him there just long enough for Button to loosen his claws which had become embedded in the bull's hide by this time, and give him a chance to jump off.

But Stubby missed his calculations. He thought the bull was too fat to run fast, so he ran straight toward him, barking as he went. But alas! with a lunge forward the bull's horns slipped under Stubby and tossed him up in the air so high that he thought he must surely be going on up over the moon. Then all of a sudden he started to come down and from the speed he knew when he hit the ground that the breath would be knocked out of him so hard that it would kill him. Just when he had made up his mind that he had

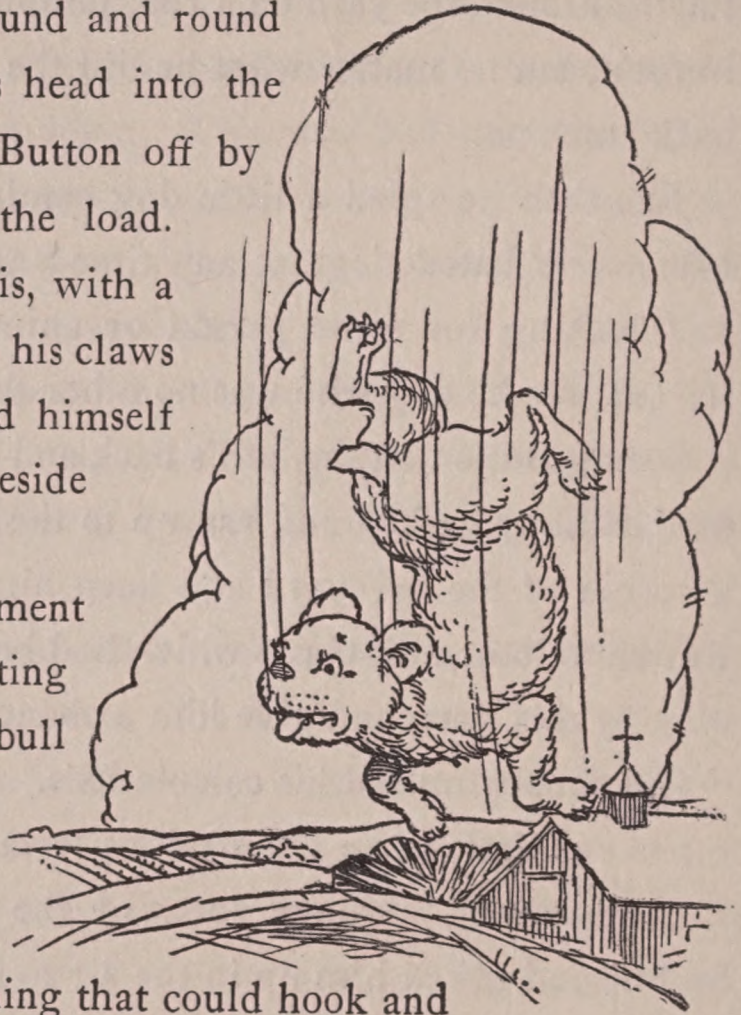
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to die, he hit something soft and opening his eyes to see what it was, he found he had fallen in the middle of a load of hay.

Now when the bull saw Stubby up in the hay, he tried to get to him and went bellowing round and round the hay wagon, butting his head into the hay and trying to scratch Button off by rubbing his sides against the load. But the first time he did this, with a mighty pull Button loosened his claws and with a spring he found himself safely on top of the load beside Stubby.

Just at this critical moment Billy and Nannie came trotting into the barnyard and the bull ran straight for them with head lowered ready to toss them over the barn. But

this time he had met something that could hook and butt quite as hard and much faster than himself. And when he got to the place where he had seen two goats standing, he found no goats in front of him, but one on either side of him sticking their long



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horns into him. With a bellow of rage he ran forward and Billy and Nannie chased him until they came to a little shed whose door was open. Into this they dodged and let the bull go raving and bellowing to his heart's content.

And while they describe their sensations to each other, I will tell you what became of Spot, for that was the name of the black and white spotted cat. When her master went after Button with the pitchfork, she ran up the side of the barn and hid on one of the rafters away up high where her master could not possibly reach her. And there she stayed until her master left the loft. When he did so there was murder in his eye, for he had taken one look out the loft door just in time to see Button riding on the back of his pet Durham bull, and it was at that moment the bull tossed Stubby up on the load of hay.

"I have them now!" he cried. "I'll run into the house and get my gun and shoot both of them. I won't have any stray dog and cat coming round here and eating up my squabs and sticking their claws into my prize bull's back!"

The minute Spot's master left the barn, she climbed down from the rafters and going to the door meowed to Button and Stubby who were still on the load of hay only a short distance from the door. She told them to jump off the load and hide somewhere as her master

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had gone to the house for his gun and he intended to shoot them on sight. "But don't go away. Hide until dark and then come back and we will feast on what is left from the wedding supper."

"All right," they meowed and barked, and jumping from the opposite side of the load of hay from which the bull was still pawing the earth and bellowing with rage, they ran to an empty corn crib at the further side of the barnyard. They crawled up through a hole in the floor of the crib and found a place of shelter as no one would ever think of looking for them there. Besides being safe, it was situated in a very advantageous place, for from its latticed sides they could see the farmhouse between the end of the barn they had just left and the cluster of sheds and outhouses. Now they could see everything that went on, both in the barnyard and at the house. They could see the bridegroom, the minister, and all the guests arrive, to say nothing of the bridal procession they could watch as it left the house on its way to the church whose tall, sharp steeple they could see piercing the clear, blue sky.

"Here Spot's master comes now, running around the barn with his shotgun in his hand and the Saint Bernard pup at his heels."

Just as the farmer came around the corner and was looking wildly in all directions for the cat and dog that had eaten his squabs and hurt his bull, the bull spied him and being of a cross, disagreeable nature, he wished to vent his anger on someone. Here was a good

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chance, a man and a dog. He cared not that the man was his master and that the dog had never even so much as barked at him. They were something to hurt and he wished to make someone smart and burn as did the scratches that Button had inflicted on his back.

Consequently Farmer Stevenson was more than surprised when his own bull came toward him at full speed, bellowing as he came. And he had just enough time to turn and run for his life before the bull was upon him. Then the chase began. Mr. Stevenson headed for the house with the bull close at his heels. He would have caught him had the bull not spied the dog and ducked his head to toss the poor puppy up in the air to land on the shed roof. Then the bull continued the chase and he caught Mr. Stevenson's coat tails which were flying out behind him in his mad flight and ripped the coat straight up the back from hem to shoulder. His long sharp horns did not touch Mr. Stevenson and luckily he escaped through an open gate into the yard of the farmhouse and slammed it in the bull's face.

As it shut it hit the bull in the nose which hurt him considerably and made him madder than ever. Now he began to kick and paw the gate down. It held for awhile, but when he threw his big broad sides against the fence, it gave way and a whole section fell into the yard. The bull walked over it, bellowing and shaking his head as

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he made straight for the kitchen door, through which he had seen Mr. Stevenson disappear.

Now *here* was a pretty how-de-do—a wedding in preparation in the house with the guests about to come and a mad bull running wild on the premises. The maids preparing the wedding supper were scared nearly out of their lives and went fluttering and squealing around the kitchen like a flock of chickens. The mother of the bride and the bridesmaids looked out the upper story window in alarm while the bride fainted for fear the groom would arrive on the scene and the bull would kill him. Of course Mr. Stevenson would shoot him at any minute but he did not want to kill his prize full-blooded, pedigreed Durham bull and sell the carcass for beef, as this would make him lose three thousand dollars, the amount at which the bull was valued. He was hoping the bull would quiet down and go back into the pasture if he saw no one to infuriate him. But how was he to get out of the house and warn the guests, who would soon be coming? He could go out the opposite side of the house, but what good would that do, for he must shut the bull out of the barnyard and he could not do that without being seen.

“Milly,” he said to one of the maids, “peek out of the window and see what he is doing now.”

Milly looked out and saw the bull standing but a few feet from

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the window pawing the earth and throwing it over his shoulder in his mad rage, bellowing all the time so loudly you could have heard him a mile away.

"Oh, it is terrible the way he is pawing and hooking all the geraniums out of the bed!"

"I know why he is doing that," spoke up another of the maids. "It is because they are red and they say a bull hates red. He thinks someone is waving a red flag at him. Look! Look! There go two plants he has uprooted flying up in the air! Let us beat on a tin pan and see if we can't attract his attention before he uproots the whole bed."

So they brought a tin pan and opening one of the windows began to pound on it. The bull heard, paused, listened, looked, and seeing two or three faces at the window stopped pawing and with a mighty roar he rushed for the window. It was too high and small for him to go through as it came halfway up to his shoulder, but he raised himself on his hind legs and tried to get his head in just the same.

Mr. Stevenson had shut the window when he saw him coming. This made no difference to Mr. Bull; he just ran his sharp horns along the outside of the window and every pane was shattered and fell over his head.

Just at this crucial moment Mrs. Stevenson called from upstairs

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that she could see two or three buggies coming down the road with wedding guests in them. They must be stopped for in his present state of mind the bull would gore the horses and perhaps kill some of the people.

"It is the minister in one buggy and the groom in another," called out one of the bridesmaids who was keeping watch at one of the upper windows. "What shall we do? What shall we do?" she wailed.

"One of you girls," said Mr. Stevenson, "keep banging on the pans to attract his attention while I sneak out of the house and go warn them."

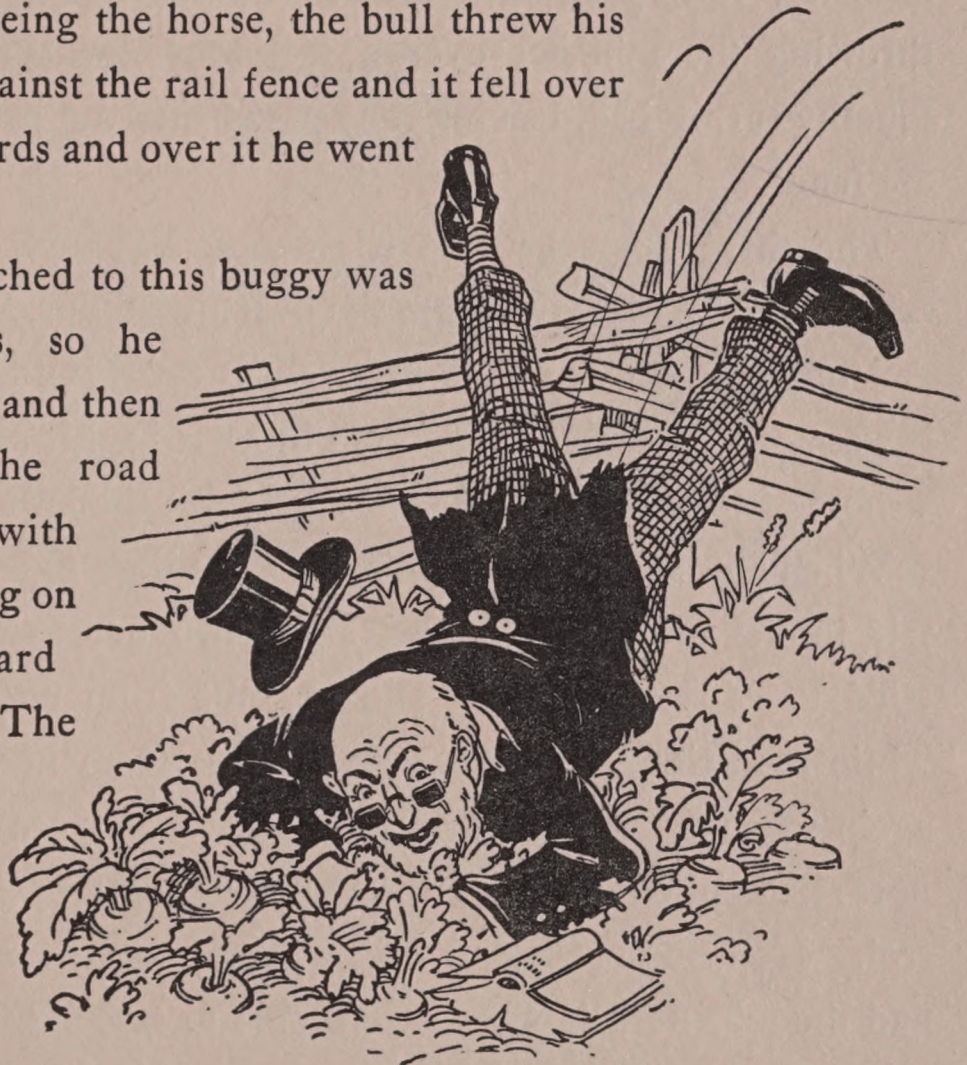
He ran down the front yard trying to get to the road to stop the guests before they turned into the lane. Then the bull, on hearing the horses coming, stopped trying to get in the window and turned his head in the direction the sound came from. He rolled his upper lip over the end of his nose as bulls do sometimes when intent on smelling something that is far away, and immediately he detected the odor of perspiring horses. Now here was something nice and big to vent his spleen on. He stopped pawing the ground and butting the window, and was about to turn and run out after them when to his dismay who should he see coming toward him but those two horrid goats that had butted him and stuck their long horns into him in the barnyard. He did not wait for them to come nearer, but

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hustled his fat self round the corner of the house and ran down the yard toward the road as fast as his great bulk would let him.

He arrived at the foot of the yard just as the first buggy reached the lane. On seeing the horse, the bull threw his whole weight against the rail fence and it fell over like a pack of cards and over it he went after the horse.

The horse hitched to this buggy was afraid of bulls, so he reared, plunged and then bolted down the road on a dead run with his driver pulling on the reins as hard as he could. The young lady with him hung on to the side of the buggy to keep from



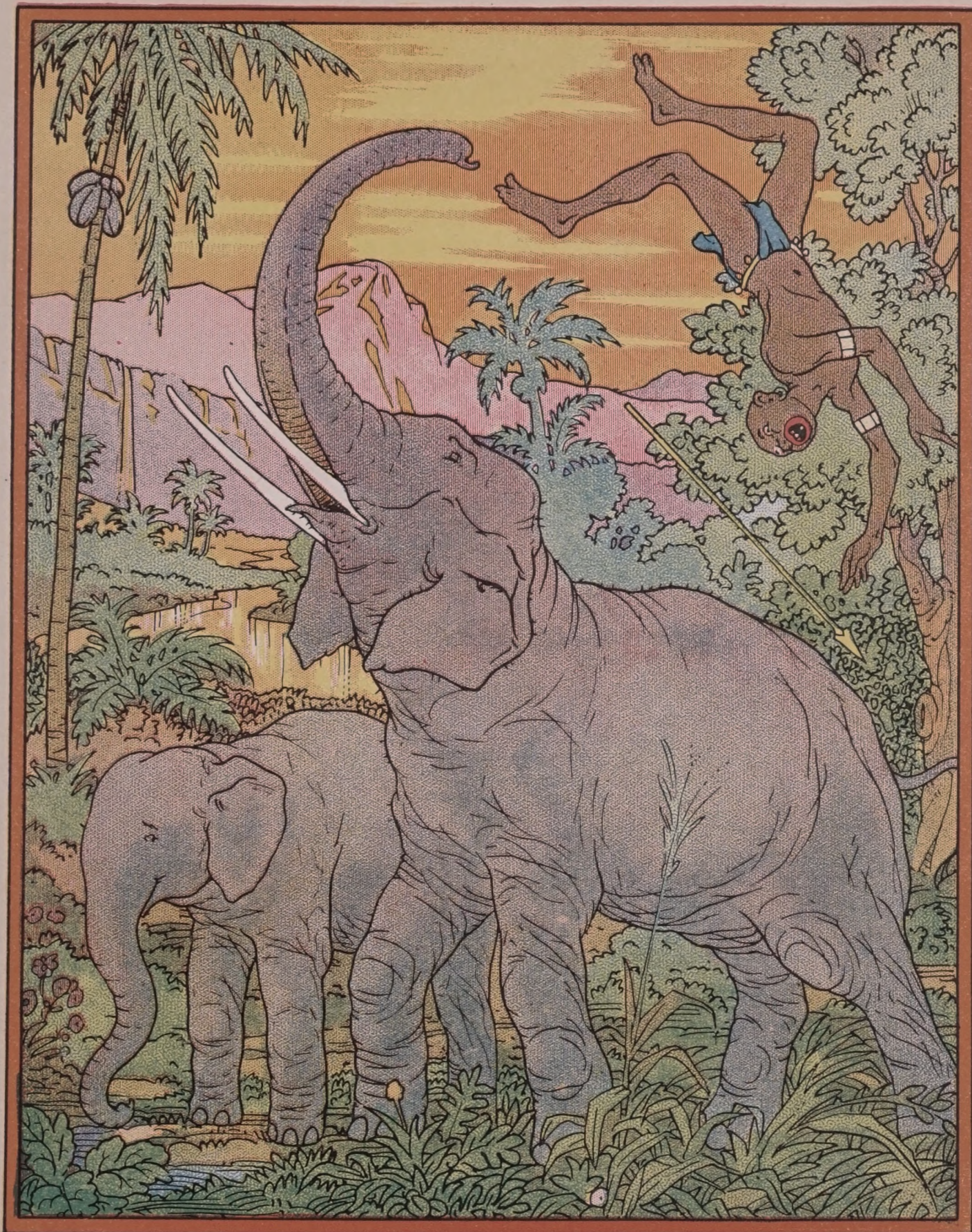
being thrown out, while her hat flew off and lit on one of the bull's horns. This he soon demolished by lowering his head and throwing the hat in the mud and stamping on it.

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This horse having escaped, the bull ran down the road to meet the other buggies he saw coming. The next horse, driven by the minister, turned straight around in the woods, upsetting it and throwing the minister over a rail fence, where he landed in a squashy turnip bed, leaving the tails of his long coat as he went over the fence.

The third horse became frightened also and in trying to turn around he ran his buggy into the overturned one, locking the wheels and breaking himself loose, as well as throwing out the groom, for it was none other than the groom himself in this buggy. Then with a snort of fear he ran down the road with the bull close to his heels.

When he recovered from his dazed feeling, the groom found himself in the muddy road under the two overturned buggies. He tried to extricate himself and get out from under the wreckage, while his bride, who had seen all this from her window, fainted again when she saw his buggy upset. But presently the man whose horse had bolted down the road succeeded in getting him under control. He came back, and with his help and that of Mr. Stevenson and the minister, they soon were able to rescue the groom from the wrecked buggies. And just as soon as this was done they shut the gate and reinforced it with logs so that should the bull come back, he could not break the gate down and come into the farmyard after them again.



"MY MOTHER STRETCHED OUT HER TRUNK AND THREW THE HUNTER OVER
HER HEAD."

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Nothing else happened and very soon the bride and groom were locked in each other's arms, rejoicing over the narrow escape of the groom. The minister was given a coat in place of the one with the tails torn off and everyone else calmed down and the wedding preparations went on as smoothly as if no bull had ever been around.

"Well, I never saw such a mix-up as that before, did you, Stub?" said Button.

"No, I never did," replied Stubby. "Hear that Saint Bernard pup howl! He has been up on the shed roof ever since the bull tossed him there and he is afraid to jump down. I'll bark to him to go to the other side and jump on a heap of straw I see piled up against it."

"You better not. Someone will hear you and find out our hiding-place."

"Oh, no, they won't hear me! They are all too much excited over their narrow escapes from being gored to death to hear me. Besides I won't bark loud."

This he did and soon the Saint Bernard puppy had joined them in their hiding-place and he was telling them all about the runaway horses and wrecked buggies that he had seen from his high place on the shed roof.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BURGLAR IN THE CELLAR



ALL the time the Saint Bernard puppy had been telling Stubby, Button and Spot what the bull had done the barnyard had been filling with buggies, wagons, automobiles, hay wagons with straw in them to cover the rack and quilts to cover the hay so it would not stick in the girls' dresses. Soon the yard was filled to its greatest capacity and the guests were beginning to drive into the yard where the corn crib was in which the Chums were hiding. It was a beautiful day and all had come to the wedding that could possibly get away.

"Boys," said Button, "we will have to find another hiding-place for all these wagons and buggies have shut off our view."

"Where shall we go?" asked Stubby. "Spot, you and the pup here know the place better than we do so perhaps you can suggest some place."

"Let me see," said Spot, holding her paw up to her face as old ladies do their forefingers to their mouths when thinking. "The only place I can think of is the cellar. But how we are to get in

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there without being seen by some of these people is more than I can tell."

"I have it!" spoke up the puppy. "We can sneak out of here and go away around back of the barn and farm buildings and through the orchard until we come to the fence that separates the orchard from the farmhouse lawn. Then we can crawl through and approach the house from the back. There will be no one around there now as they are all busy at the other side of the house where the summer kitchen is. We can creep along from the back of the house to the side window of the cellar that is always left open and we can jump through. It is over the potato bin which is in one corner of the cellar and we can stay in the bin until the family start for church. Should anyone come into the cellar they would not see us, as it has high sides and, besides, it is always dark in that corner."

"You're right," agreed Spot. "That will be a dandy place to hide. But hiding isn't the best part of the plan. We will be in the house to eat up what goodies are left from the feast. And we might be able to find and pick up a tidbit or two from the floor while they are at the church. If we were outside the house, we would probably be locked out, but once inside we don't care if we are locked up for an hour or so."

This plan was considered a good one and in a few minutes you

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could have seen first a white cat with black spots poke her head under the orchard fence and peer around cautiously in all directions before pulling her whole body through the fence. Then she made running leaps toward the open cellar window and in a jiffy disappeared through it. Close on her heels came a black cat, and then a puppy, but he was too big to crawl through the hole. He had to stop and dig it out so he could squeeze through and while he was doing this, a little stubby-tailed dog took a flying leap over the fence, followed by two white goats, all of which made straight for the cellar window and jumped in. But just before they jumped, Stubby and Button stared in amazement at Billy and Nannie, for it was the first time they had seen them since their return. How was it that Nannie had come back with Billy? But they hadn't time to ask any questions now.

The potatoes were piled high in the bin close up against the wall. This eased their jump from the window to the floor. But when they landed, it sent the potatoes rolling and they came bang up against the wooden partition at the bottom and made a racket. It chanced that a maid was just leaving the cellar with a pan of milk. Hearing the racket in the dark corner of the cellar, she thought it must be a rat. Being particularly afraid of rats, she screamed and ran for the stairs. In her hurry she stepped on the front of her dress which threw her on her face on the stairs. She

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dropped the pan of milk which turned over and went rattlety bang to the foot of the stairs and along the cellar floor.

"Now there will be the dickens to pay!" exclaimed Billy. "That maid has made such a racket, she will bring the whole household upon us. We must hide quickly. Nannie, run under the cellar stairs and squeeze yourself in the corner as far as you can. I'll hide behind that big packing box in the opposite corner."



All this noise attracted the attention of Mrs. Stevenson, who hastened to the cellar door.

"Why, Hulda! What is the matter? Are you hurt?"

"No, ma'am, but there is a rat in the cellar and I am afraid he will get me."

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"You silly girl to make such a fuss over a rat! It won't hurt you. Don't you know that they are more afraid of you than you are of them?"

"Maybe, but I hate them and am afraid they will get on me. Do help me, Mrs. Stevenson! I am all mixed up in my dress and can't get up."

She had stepped on the front breadth and instead of stepping off it backward, she was still walking up the front, tearing it as she struggled.

While Mrs. Stevenson was helping her, something deplorable happened. Stubby sneezed. He absolutely could not help it.

"What was that? Who is there?" asked Mrs. Stevenson in a frightened voice. She thought right away that it was no rat Hulda had heard, but a burglar who had hidden himself in the cellar to steal the wedding presents when the family had left the house to go to the church. She grabbed Hulda by the shoulder and they both flew up the stairs and slammed the door.

"Now we are in for it!" said Stubby.

"Yes, they will tell the men and in a jiffy they will be down here with sticks, canes, stove-pokers and brooms," said Button. "We must get out of here as quickly as we can, and stay out until they are gone."

"But how am *I* to get out?" said the puppy. "I am so fat that I had

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to squeeze through the window and then fall in, but I can't jump up."

"You are about the color of potatoes," said Stubby. "Get in the darkest part of the bin, keep your eyes closed and your head between your paws and you will look like an old piece of carpet or a fuzzy mat. But on your life don't open your eyes! They will shine in the darkness and give you away. Now hurry and crawl down and I will roll a lot of potatoes on you."

"Hark! I hear someone coming. I must go!" and Stubby hunched himself, jumped through the window and joined the others just as three men armed with revolvers, pokers and canes, carrying lamps and candles high over their heads, entered the cellar. The puppy could hear them but he did not move and he kept his eyes shut and his head between his fore paws. He could hear them rummaging between boxes and barrels and talking all the time. They loudly ordered the burglar or whoever was there to come out and give himself up before they found him and beat him to a jelly. "If you come out and give yourself up, we won't beat you," they promised.

At that moment one of them stepped on a board and it flew up and hit him on the shins. This noise made the man with the lamp jump and he hit the chimney on a hanging shelf which knocked it crooked. To straighten it he put it down on the packing box Billy was hiding behind. But horrors! what was that he heard? Just like someone

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breathing, and at that moment he spied two big eyes looking at him. He dropped the lamp into the box and it would soon have set fire to the house as it was full of old papers, had not Billy, in his endeavors to save himself, upset the box. This turned its con-



tents on the flames and put them out, while Billy ran across the cellar and jumped out the window.

In his haste to escape he ran into one of the other men, knocked him over and out went the candle. The remaining man stepped in the spilt milk and fell in front of the two whose lights had gone

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out. There all three lay in a heap on the floor imagining the burglars were after them. At this moment someone opened the cellar door and let in a flood of light. Seeing three men on the floor with their legs and arms flying, they thought it was a fight, so shut the door, bolted it and ran for help.

When Nannie saw the men fighting and Billy jumping out the window, she left her hiding-place and started to follow Billy. But alas! in her hurry she did not see a tub of cucumber pickles and she fell head first into it. She stepped out with brine dripping from her hair into her eyes and a lot of little pickles strung on her horns. When Billy saw her, he rolled on the grass with laughter.

"The fool!" exclaimed one of the men on the floor. "Why didn't she leave that door open so we could see?"

At last they untangled themselves and got up and tried to find the stairs in the dark. Having no matches, they could not relight their candles. The only ray of light in the whole cellar was a faint gleam from the window over the potato bin. One man went toward it, hoping to find it large enough to crawl through, but when he was within a few feet of the bin, he thought he heard someone breathing. He listened. Yes, it was surely a person breathing regularly. This frightened him until his legs trembled under him and he tried to run but they wobbled so he could not. He tried to call to the other men but his tongue clove to the roof of his

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mouth and he could not make a sound. While this was happening, another man had started for the window and in groping his way toward it he touched the frightened man who was standing still in the dark. He turned to run he knew not where, but just as far as he could get from the man he had touched. In his hurry he did not heed where he was going. The next thing he knew he stubbed his toe and he too fell headlong into the tub of pickles.

By this time more men appeared at the head of the stairs and came down into the cellar with a lantern. They searched and searched but all they found was the three frightened men and a little old woolly mat in the potato bin. So they left the cellar, some arguing there was no burglar there, while the others argued there was. What could sneeze and breathe and feel like flesh and blood? The last the puppy heard of them they were calling one another cowards and fools, as they slammed the cellar door. But he heard one man say: "I thought I came to a wedding, but I seem to have come to a bull fight and a burglar chase! Goodness knows what else will take place before they are really married!"

Now this wedding was to be an old-fashioned one like they have in the rural districts of Europe, where the bride and the bridesmaids in all their finery without hats or wraps, the groom and all the guests walk in a procession along the country roads or over the fields to the church. The Chums had decided to wait until the

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wedding procession left the house and then go into the kitchen and look for goodies. At last all had gotten over their fright of bulls and burglars and were smiling and happy as they left the house, little dreaming of what was going to happen then.

The Chums all hid behind some bushes in the yard to watch the bridal party start. First came a boy of about sixteen, dressed in knee breeches, white shirt and blue velvet waistcoat, with a tiny red cap embroidered in gold set on one side of his head. As he led the procession he played on a much beribboned flute.

At a signal the bride and groom followed him, and behind them the father and mother of the bride, and after them came the rest of the guests two by two. It was a bright, beautiful day and the wedding procession made a very picturesque sight as it wound its way across the green fields and over the stile at the bottom of the hill. There too they had to cross a little gurgling stream on stepping stones and then wend their way up a shaded path to the church on the top of a hill.

But the fates must have been against them that day, for they were only half way up the first hill when who should come running at full speed toward them but the big Durham bull chased by none other than Billy Whiskers himself and another goat like him. Once the bull stopped and turned to show fight, but Billy and Nannie made a plunge at him from either side and ran their sharp horns

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into him. He turned and raced down the road. All he thought of then was to reach his stall in the barn where he would be safe from these awful bossy, cross old goats that were so quick he could not get a chance to hook them, kick them or stamp on them.

But alas! when he reached the lane, the gate was locked and barred. Though he threw his weight against it, he could not break it down. He ran on down the road, looking for some place to slip in to dodge the old goats. He had gone only a short distance when he came to a place where the bars were down where the wedding party had passed through.

Through this he went, and seeing a lot of people in the distance he ran toward them, thinking perhaps they would drive off his tormentors. All unconscious of impending disaster, the wedding party was wending its way to the church, keeping time to the music of the flute and some of the guests singing as they went. It must have been the singing that prevented their hearing the bull's heavy tread as he ran toward them. He had gotten within fifty feet of them when he stopped running and gave a loud bellow.

If a thunderbolt had sounded from the clear sky, they could not have been more surprised, and of course it threw them in a panic. They ran in all directions, the men either dragging the girls along with them or catching them up in their arms and running for safety. The poor old father and mother of the bride were so stunned and

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frightened they could not move from where they stood. They just dropped to their knees and prayed to be saved.

The bride, groom and piper were considerably ahead of the others. The groom, seeing a big tree with low limbs ahead of him, picked the bride up in his arms and ran to it. He succeeded in lifting the bride into a crotch of the tree between two big limbs, but before he himself could climb up, the bull was upon him. He dodged around the trunk of the tree and the bull plunged full force into it. He butted it so hard that for a few seconds he stood still, showing it had hurt him badly. Then seeing a long white thing flopping in the breeze and wrapping itself around his head and tickling his nose, he backed off to give it another butt. Just then those terrible goats came running after him again and gave him such a hooking and butting that he turned and ran for the ravine. Billy and Nannie were close on his heels, hooking him every time he tried to slow down to get breath.

But alas! He was carrying the bride's veil away with him. It had become fastened around his horns and when he started to run it had jerked it from the bride's head. After the wedding party had watched the two goats chase the bull down into a ravine out of sight, they all got together again and one of the bridesmaids saw the veil on the ground where it had fallen and ran and got it. After straightening it out, she put it on the bride's head, not much the

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worse for its hard usage. The procession started again for the church, and I am happy to say that no other mishaps befell them. Had there, I am afraid the bride's nerves would have given way entirely.

CHAPTER IX

THE BRIDAL SUPPER



AND now we will go back and see what the Chums did while the family was at the church.

After they had watched the bridal party out of sight, they jumped through the cellar window and running up the cellar stairs, they found to their joy that in the hurry the family had forgotten to shut the cellar door. So all they had to do was to walk into the kitchen. As they did so, the delicious odor of roast chicken, spiced ham, salads, jellies and untold goodies reached their nostrils. And there in the oven, all ready to be served, were the chicken and mounds of mashed potatoes whipped until they looked like heaps of snow they were so feathery and white, while beside them were dishes of candied sweet potatoes and pans of peas, turnips, and beets. On another table were extra wedding cakes, some covered with chocolate icing and others with white icing with English walnuts sprinkled on top, and piles of nut cakes and little spice cakes. On another were salads, jellies, salted nuts, sweet pickles, sour pickles and red preserves, while between these dishes

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were plates heaped high with all kinds of sandwiches so daintily made that they would melt in one's mouth.

"My! Oh, my! Did you ever see so many good things all at one time in your life?" said Stubby. "They have enough to feed a regiment. We could all eat our fill and then they would have plenty left, but I think it would be a mean thing to do, especially after all the trouble the bride has gone through to-day. It would nearly kill her to come home and find all her wedding supper messed up. Besides, we shall find plenty of scraps to more than fill us up when they are through eating. And we can get them without any trouble whatever for they will set pails full of the scraps outside the door for Spot and the Saint Bernard puppy."

"I think you are right, Stubby," said Button and all the others agreed it would be a shame to touch the things.

"Yes, I know," replied the puppy, "but I am so dreadfully hungry and these things smell so good, I wish I could bite just *one* chicken wing."

"Oh, no! Then they would know that someone had been here."

"Look! See what I have found!" meowed Spot.

They all looked and over in one corner of the kitchen under the table was a big pail heaped full of scraps and good things to eat.

"Come here!" meowed Spot. "We can eat all this for this is the pail that holds the scraps they feed to the pigs."

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In a jiffy they were all eating from the pail, each picking out the morsel they liked best. They ate and ate until the pail was empty, and they even ate up the scraps that fell on the floor.

"It is too bad Billy can't have some of this good stuff," said Stubby. "I think I will go after him and bring him back so he can get some before the family returns."

With Stubby to think a thing was to do it, so he ran down the cellar stairs, jumped out the window and ran to the field where he had seen Billy and Nannie chasing the bull. After sniffing round a bit, he picked up the scent of Billy and away he went across the field down into the ravine where they had disappeared from sight when the wedding party was watching them. At the foot of the hill the bull had run into a little stream and Billy had followed him. Consequently Stubby lost the scent, but he soon found it by running downstream until he saw where the limbs of some low hanging bushes had been broken off and there were some cattle tracks in the soft mud. Climbing out here, he took up the scent again and was running rapidly up a hill when he heard Billy baa: "Where are you going in such a hurry, Stub?" and looking up he saw Billy standing on a ledge of rock high above him.

"Where is your bull?" Stubby asked.

"Oh, he is worn out and lying down a little way from here."

"Well, leave him and come with me back to the farmhouse where

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you can get a splendid supper of chicken, potatoes, jelly and vegetables of all kinds.”

“Thank you very much, Stubby, for thinking of me, but you forget that I prefer uncooked food and vegetables, grass and grain to meat and potatoes.”

“You are right, I surely *did* forget. I was enjoying them so, all I thought was that I wished you could have some too.”

“Stub, you are the most generous dog I ever knew—you are always thinking of your friends. I know if a friend were cold or in trouble that you would give away your skin and your head also, if they were not fastened to you. But I will come back with you anyway, and watch the return of the bride.”

When they reached the farmhouse they heard the puppy barking to them to come where they were. But though he barked and barked, they could not see him. It sounded as if his bark came from the roof of the carriage house. Presently, however, Billy spied him standing in an open door of the second story of the carriage house. They hurried along until they stood under the door, then they called up to him to tell them how to get up where he was.

“Go around to the back and you will see a big hole under the house. Crawl in that and you will see another hole in the floor that comes out at the foot of a pair of stairs that leads to where we are.”

They hurried along but when they got there Billy was too big.

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He could not crawl through the hole though they dug it deeper. And even if they had succeeded in making it larger, the one in the floor could not be made big enough for him to get his horns through.

"Never mind, Stubby; you go up to them. I'll find some good place to hide," which he did. He saw one of the low loads of hay and he and Nannie jumped up on it and lay down on one of the soft quilts. Both were soon fast asleep for they were tired from chasing the bull.

How long they slept they did not know, but they were awakened by laughing, chat-



tering voices beside the hay load and one girl was coaxing another to climb up the ladder first onto the load.

"So they are coming up here, are they? Well, we will just duck our heads under this quilt and if they see our fur they will think it a white fur rug."

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That is just what they did think. But it proved disastrous to Billy and Nannie, for a big fat girl weighing nearly two hundred pounds dropped down on them, half on Billy and half on Nannie, and nearly broke their backs. Billy let out a groan and raised his head. When he did that, it frightened her so that in rolling off him she rolled clear off the load and came down kerplunk on the opposite side of the wagon. At this moment another girl appeared at the top of the ladder, but on seeing the goats she screamed and fell over backwards, carrying the ladder with her.

All this commotion brought their beaux to the scene and when they saw two billy goats standing on the hay load, they all laughed and made fun of the girls for being so afraid. One of the men jumped up on the load to drive them off, but he made the mistake of taking a club with him. Had he let them alone the goats would have jumped off the wagon and not hurt anyone. But the young fellow wanted to show off before the girls, so he hit Billy a crack with the club and the next thing he knew *he* was flying through the air over the girls' heads and when he came down he landed in the pig pen, astride a big fat pig. He was not hurt in the least, only surprised, but his pride had had a bad fall and the girls all laughed at him, making it ten times worse.

Billy and Nannie now jumped off the wagon and, kicking up their heels, they ran under the wagons and around the autos that

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were standing in the yard so fast that none of the men could catch them, and soon they disappeared behind the barn. From there they hid between three or four strawstacks where they could easily dodge anyone that should follow them. But no one did. Now the wedding guests had started to go home, it took but a little while to clear the barnyard of all the wagons, buggies and automobiles crowded in there.

Soon everything was as still as if there had been no wedding or any other excitement. When it was nearly dark, the cats and dogs came out of the carriage house loft and found Billy and Nannie behind the strawstacks where they all spent the night. Early the next morning before anyone was astir in the farmhouse, our Chums bade the spotted cat and Saint Bernard puppy good-by and continued their pleasure journey.

"Here we have been away from home over a week and we have fooled along so that we are not more than one hundred miles from home yet."

"But what is the use of hurrying?" asked Button. "We are only out for pleasure."

"You are right, Button. And what do you two say to our not going to California as we have been there two or three times before, but to going directly west from here, visiting South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Oregon? We would probably see a

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good deal of ranch life and some magnificent mountain scenery as soon as we get beyond the desert and treeless plains of Dakota and part of Wyoming. It will be a much harder trip, but who cares? We are used to hardships since the Great War."

"We are with you!" barked Stubby and meowed Button.

"Billy," spoke up Stubby, "I believe we would have a much pleasanter time if we followed some main railroad track. If we go straight in a northwesterly direction from here we will strike the Northern Pacific Railroad at St. Paul and by following that it will take us just where we want to go on the Pacific Coast. What is more, by simply going a little out of our way we can visit the Yellowstone Park, one of America's largest and most interesting natural parks. There tame bear, deer, buffalo and other wild animals rove about free, protected from the hunter by game laws. And what is more, we can see the wonderful hot geyser springs that throw sprays of boiling water up into the air from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and seventy feet high, for four-minute periods every sixty-five to seventy minutes. So regularly does one of these springs throw up this spray that it has been named Old Faithful. Then there are many other wonderful springs, falls and rivers to see there besides the native forest of huge trees two or three hundred years old."

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"That all sounds good to me, Stubby," said Billy. "What say you, Nannie? For it will be something entirely new that none of us has ever seen before."

Nannie being in favor of the plan, they traveled steadily this way with few adventures or mishaps until they reached St. Paul. Here they prepared to stop to rest and have several good meals of meat before starting off on their long journey across the treeless plains where there would be nothing but prairie dogs, sand birds' eggs, and such things for Stubby and Button to eat and sagebrush and long, coarse grass for Billy and Nannie. As for water to drink, they did not know where in the world they would get it, as there is only one river of importance in North Dakota, the Missouri, and few streams in the country they would be passing through. But for all that, they were going to try it.

They were all resting in a quiet back yard they had found, Button asleep on the top of a shed and Billy and Nannie on the ground beneath him, when a big gray cat stuck its head through the gate that led into the alley. When he saw Billy, Nannie and Stubby asleep, he crept cautiously up to them and stood watching them as they slept. After he had scrutinized them all he wished to, he meowed two or three times in a low voice which did not awaken Billy, Nannie or Stubby, but did Button. He stood up and meowed back

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to the cat which surprised it so it was about to run away, for it had not seen Button.

"Don't hurry away!" said Button. "Did you wish to speak to the goats or dog?"

"Yes, if this one goat is the celebrated Billy Whiskers that has traveled all over the world and been in the Big War in Europe. I have an invitation for him."

"He is the one you are looking for then, for that goat is none other than the celebrated and world-renowned traveler, Billy Whiskers. And the dog beside him is the same dog that has traveled with him and been in all the wars with him. The other goat is Nannie, his wife."

"You don't mean to say that that little yellow dog is Stubby, Billy Whiskers' lifelong friend and companion? If that is so, you must be Button, the celebrated big black cat that has also been his chum and traveling companion."

"You are right. I am his friend and chum but I don't claim to be very celebrated."

"Well you are, and every dog, cat and goat in this city has heard of you three. And I hear you are now making a trip to the coast alone and on foot, and are going to brave the dangers of the desert and treeless plains. You little know what dangers you are facing. Many, many dogs and cats have tried but their bones now

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lie bleaching on the desert sands or they have come back more dead than alive. I beg of you not to attempt it on foot and without someone to look after you."

"Oh, don't fear for us! We are too experienced travelers to be afraid of deserts and treeless plains. But I thank you for your solicitude in our behalf."

For quite a while Billy, Nannie and Stubby had been awake but had kept their eyes shut, pretending to be asleep. Now they opened them and spoke to the gray cat.

"My friend," said Billy, "will you kindly tell us how you heard we were coming here?"

"Certainly I will tell you. When you were in Minneapolis some sparrows who had gone to roost in a cluster of lilac bushes in the park heard you talking to several dogs and cats who had gathered there to hear you tell of some of your adventures when in the Great War. And the sparrows were so interested that in the morning they told the pigeons living on the court house roof they must find you and hear you speak on the War.

"They flew in all directions but they could not find you until in the late afternoon they met a cat who had heard you talking the very evening before. She told the pigeon that you had all left Minneapolis for St. Paul early the next morning before the city was astir. And she added that you were traveling fast as you wished

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to get across the treeless plains and semi-deserts you would have to cross before reaching the Yellowstone Park, at which place you were going to stop before continuing your journey to the Pacific Coast. The cat added that she had told a carrier pigeon to take the news that you were coming to St. Paul and for them all to be on the lookout for Billy Whiskers, the world-renowned traveler, mascot and fighter, who was on his way there with his two equally well-known Chums, Stubby and Button.

"And so you see that is the way the news reached St. Paul. The sparrows told the pigeons, the pigeons told the cat, the cat told the carrier pigeon and the carrier pigeon told me, and both of us told every dog, cat, goat, donkey, horse and cow we met that you were coming and for them to speak to you if they chanced to see you and try to coax you to meet them in the park at twelve o'clock to-night and give them a reminiscence of your adventures and travels."

"I am sure it is more than kind of you to take all that trouble and interest in me and under the circumstances I don't see how I can refuse to give a short talk."

"Thank you so much! Now I am going to ask another favor, and that is that your friends Stubby and Button will also give talks and relate some of their hairbreadth escapes when on their travels."

"Thank you very kindly," replied Button, "but I am no speaker

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and I refuse to take up the time that would shorten Billy's talk."

"Oh, no! You don't get out so easily, Mr. Button," spoke up Billy. "You have to talk as well as I do. And you too, Stubby, so you need not try to sneak out of that gate, for you also have to speak or I won't."


"That is it, Mr. Whiskers! Bring them up to the scratch so I can count on you three being in the middle of the park at twelve o'clock sharp to-night. I hope your wife also will honor us with her presence."

"Yes, we will all be there unless we are locked up in the police station or some other bad luck befalls us."

"Au revoir then until to-night," and with a profusion of thanks and scraping and bowing, the gray cat backed out the alley gate and disappeared to spread the news of the coming lectures to be given by Billy, Stubby and Button.

CHAPTER X

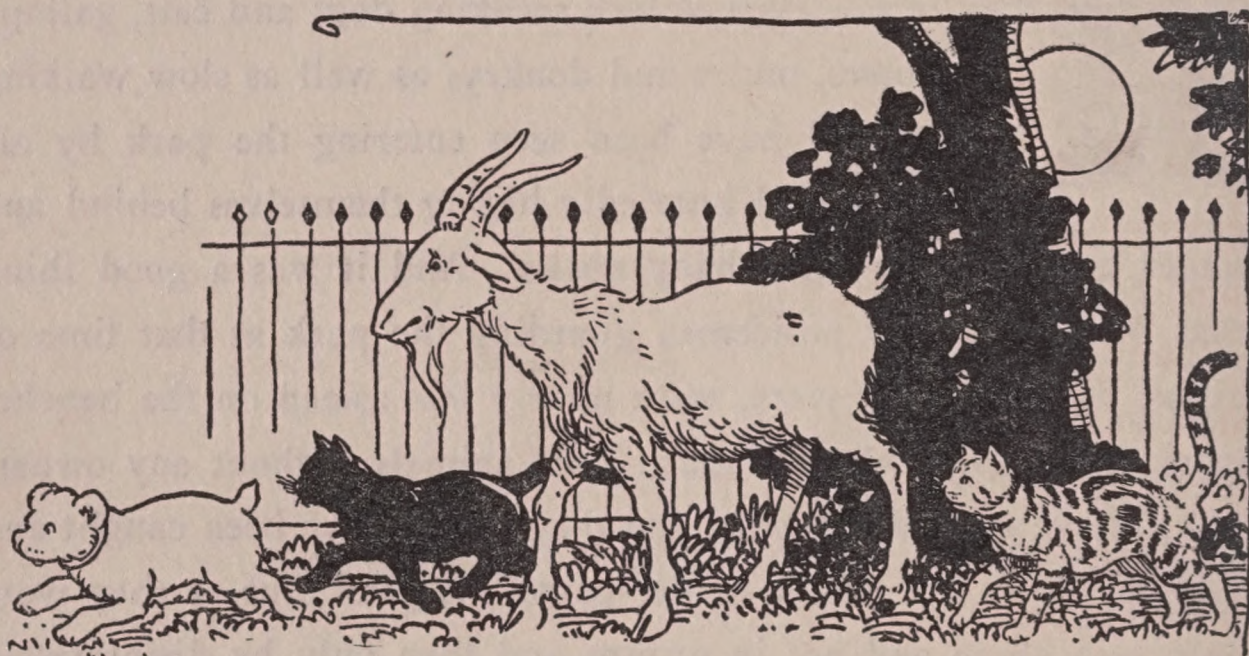
A THRILLING EXPERIENCE

S early as eleven o'clock sneaking dogs and cats, galloping horses, mules and donkeys as well as slow walking cows could have been seen entering the park by all entrances and hurriedly hiding themselves behind and under bushes or in dark shady nooks. And it was a good thing that there were few policemen guarding the park at that time of night, and that what were, were mostly fast asleep on the benches in secluded spots, else all these loose animals without any owners would have excited comment and they would have been caught and carried off to the pound in the patrol wagon. But as they were only seen alone and not in groups and then only by disinterested autoists bent on getting home as quickly as they could, they were not molested. They kept coming and coming until scarcely a bush, tree or statue but concealed an animal hiding behind it waiting for the hour of twelve to strike.

At last off in the city somewhere a clock was heard striking and on the last stroke of twelve, away out in the still moonlight night

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Billy, Stubby and Button and the gray cat stole out from some bushes they had been hiding in and proceeded to the center of the park. All the other animals did likewise and now there were three hundred of them standing in a semi-circle around Billy, Stubby, Button and the gray cat, who introduced the Chums to the assembled multitude as soon as the crowd became quiet. Billy began:



"My dear friends! I feel most flattered to have been invited to address such a distinguished audience. And it will give me much pleasure to tell you of my adventures in foreign lands."

"One of the most exciting and thrilling adventures I ever had in my whole life was when I was in the Island of Sicily where the

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earthquake occurred that buried Messina, one of its largest cities, under the mud and dirt that was carried over the fallen city by the huge tidal wave which swept along the shore of that beautiful city, burying it under a coat of soft mud many, many feet deep. The earthquake was bad enough, but the tidal wave was much worse. Then to add to the worries and troubles of the inhabitants, Mount Etna, one of the largest active volcanoes in the world, was in a state of eruption and might at any moment cause another earthquake or throw out a shower of hot ashes that would bury the remaining inhabitants under it as Vesuvius had buried the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

“Now for the part I had in this excitement. As it happened, I chanced to be on the Island when all this occurred and not only on the Island, but in the very city of Messina. For days Mount Etna had been throwing out huge volumes of black and yellow smoke and occasionally great bowlders would be seen flying up with the smoke, followed by tremblings of the earth for many miles around. The smoke increased in volume, the rumbling and trembling of the earth became more severe with each earthquake and two or three small cone-shaped holes appeared on its sides through which molten lava poured forth like rivers of fire. When this happened, the peasants who lived on the mountain sides left their vineyards and

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fled from the fast traveling rivers of lava before they could overtake them and bury them as well as their vineyards under their creepy, crawly molten streams.

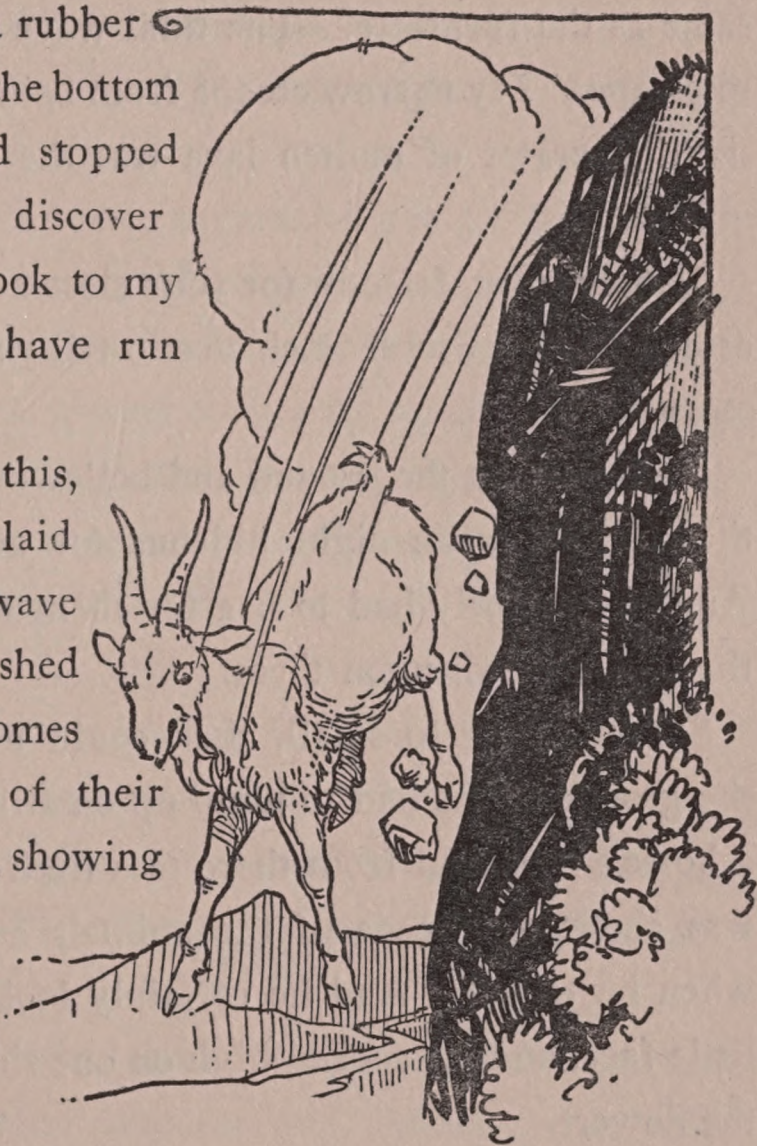
"I had always wished to see a volcano in action, and I was now to get my fill of the sight, for I came near staying too long and being buried also. I was standing gazing at its many cones—for Etna, unlike Vesuvius, has many, many small cones on its sides through which smoke and lava escape when it is in a state of activity. Well, as I said before, I was standing near the base of the mountain when I was thrown violently to the ground by an upheaval of the earth, and directly where I had been standing appeared a fissure crack three feet wide and many feet long that ran up the volcano's side to a small cone. As I was picking myself up I saw the slow-moving, thick stream of lava begin to roll out through the crevice just made and come toward me.

"Perhaps I did not pick myself up and begin to run! At least that is what I tried to do, but alas! I could not walk, much less run, for the constant shaking of the earth which threw me down repeatedly and shook me up as easily as if I had been a rag goat. Bruised and bleeding as I was, I kept on trying to get off the mountain on to steady ground, but it seemed as if the whole mountain for a time was but a trembling mass ready to fly to pieces and destroy everything on it.

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"At last like a drunken man I stumbled and fell and as the sides of the volcano were very steep here, I rolled clear to the bottom, hitting stones and stumps and bouncing through the rows of grapevines in the vineyards like a rubber ball. But at last I reached the bottom more dead than alive and stopped rolling. Not waiting to discover how badly I was hurt, I took to my legs and ran as I never have run before or since.

"And while I was doing this, the big earthquake had laid Messina low and the tidal wave had swept over it and washed the sides of their plaster homes away, leaving the inside of their front rooms exposed to view, showing the bedrooms with bed, dresser and chair just where the inhabitants had left them. But alas, the water had washed the plaster from the walls around and over them so that they were completely embedded in the soft plaster and mud



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and could not be gotten out by one unless they ran the danger of pulling the whole house down on their heads. And many, many people were caught in their homes and buried in this soft mud, the same as the furniture. The tidal wave had come too fast for them to escape. My narrow escape from being dropped into that boiling, sizzling crater of molten lava was the most exciting adventure of my life.

"I thank you, friends, for your close attention and I will now step aside and give Stubby a chance to tell you of one of his hairbreadth escapes."

With pawing the ground and bellowing in lieu of handclappings, the animals made night hideous for awhile with their applause. And at last Billy had to baa for them to stop or they would bring the police down upon them.

Stubby being so small, they could not see him if he stood on the ground, so he had to jump up on Billy's back and from there to a horse's back and from there to a high vase of flowers. There he was above the heads of the animals and they could all see him when he talked. And he certainly looked cunning with his saucy little face, one ear cocked high on one side peeping out from among the flowers.

"My dear friends," began Stubby, "I am trembling in every limb at the thought of addressing such a distinguished crowd. Espe-

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cially after my friend Billy, who is a noted after-dinner speaker. I am no speaker and what I have to tell you will seem tame indeed after the recital of his wonderful escape."

"We are not critical," called out the animals. "Go ahead and tell us anything, for we know you have been through the War and must have had many narrow escapes."

"Yes, I have. If you would care to hear of one of them I can tell you of one of the closest shaves which was at one of the battles Billy and I were in when we were in the war between Japan and Russia, and it happened when we were close up against the enemy trenches and not fighting at long distance. It was a couple of days before the final battle when my master was assigned some spy duty. This meant creeping out in the dead of night close up to the enemy's front. I heard the order given and I determined to follow him. I knew he would forbid my going for fear I would be shot or maimed in some way, not because he was afraid I would give him away, for I had been with him on too many just such dangerous duties. So when he started I pretended to be asleep on the foot of his bed where I always slept.

"But what do you think he did to keep me behind in case I should wake up? He threw a blanket over me and pinned me in with big safety pins, and then sneaked out. I only waited long enough for the sound of his footsteps to die away in the distance when I

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tried to get out of the blanket. I felt sure there was some hole I could crawl through where the pins were not too close together. But alas! He had done his work too thoroughly. There was not a space I could even get my head through, so I rolled over on my back and began to scratch and claw at that blanket like mad, but the fuzz and dust got in my eyes and my nose so I had to stop or be suffocated, pinned in as I was. Consequently I stopped the clawing and scratching and tried to think of some other way to get out. I did not want to bark as that would awaken the soldiers and they would find out my master was missing. This I did not want them to know, for when an officer goes out on a secret task, the fewer that know it the better.

"As I lay there resting and wondering what I should do, the thought struck me: 'Use your sharp teeth, chew a hole in the blanket and when big enough for you to get your nose through, tear it the rest of the way.' And in a jiffy I was doing this and in another jiffy I was out and nosing around to get on the scent of my master.

"This was easy to do, but to my surprise I found he had crawled under the back of the tent instead of going out the front way. What was more, I soon perceived that he was wiggling along on his stomach instead of walking. He did this until he had crossed the bare place where the tents were pitched and had entered a thick

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woods. Now of all dangerous places, this woods was the worst as it was filled with spies of both armies trying to find out the number of men on the opposite side or secure any information they could pick up. And one was as likely to be picked off by a bullet from one of his own men as by an enemy, unless he gave the proper signal and gave it quickly at that. When my master was well into the woods, he stood up and seemed to move cautiously from tree to tree, selecting big ones to hide behind. All of a sudden I came to a bush that had had half of its branches broken off, and all around it where the branches were off I could smell my master's tracks.

“‘Heigho!’ I thought, ‘I know what he is up to now. I have seen him play this same trick on the enemy before. He is covering himself with branches so when he stands still he will look like a bush and the enemy’s sentinel will pass him in the dark.’ To find his own way he had a tiny little electric searchlight which he could flash on for a minute at a time but so small was it that it had the appearance at a distance of being a firefly, should anyone see him using it.

“But all of a sudden he seemed to be running and taking long bounds, for he could not possibly have taken such long steps as I found he was taking. It made it very hard to keep on his trail. Once when I lost it completely and was sniffing round for it I

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came upon the scent of a Russian police dog. And I knew immediately what had caused my master to use long steps and jumps. He was in flight. Probably he had found he was discovered and followed, or else a soldier and his dog had passed along the same trail, not knowing a man was fleeing before them. But I should soon find out. With my heart in my mouth, I started to trail the police dog, fearful of coming upon my dead master at every bend in the trail. Suddenly I came upon a big tree and there lying at its foot was a Russian soldier and his police dog, both dead but still warm. I knew from that that they had just been killed. And I thanked God that it was they and not my master that was dead.

"I did not waste much time on them but began to hunt around to see in which direction my master had gone. But though I sniffed and sniffed and ran around like mad, I could not pick up the scent. Every scent led to the big tree where I had found the dead soldier and dog. All of a sudden, chancing to look up in the tree, what should I see but a firefly in the midst of a thick bunch of leaves! And of course I knew it was no firefly but my master's little electric searchlight. He must have seen me at the same time I spied him, for in a second he came climbing down the tree and when he was down he patted me on the head and whispered in my ear: 'Stubby, I thank God it is you! I heard you running around in the dead

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leaves under the tree and I thought you were another Russian or a police dog.'

"Just then he went white and nearly fell over in a faint. At the same time I smelled fresh blood and on looking down I saw a bullet hole in his boot-leg from which the blood was oozing. The next second I licked his face and jingled my collar on his nose. He felt the cold contact of the bottle that was around my neck and raised himself enough to unfasten it and take a drink. This revived him enough for him to detach the adhesive plaster and sterilized cotton he had carefully rolled up in a tin box and fastened to my collar alongside the flask of brandy I always wore when out on scout duty for just such emergencies. My master had fixed it all up himself but had never had occasion to use it before. And my! but wasn't I thankful that he had, and also thankful that I had insisted on following him?

"With the brandy and the stopping of the flow of blood he soon was himself and he began to search the Russian soldier for any valuable papers he might have on him. To his joy, he found the man was not a common soldier but one of their most valued spies. For hidden in his helmet which had a false top, he found exceedingly valuable papers telling of the movement of the very division of the army that his division was now fighting. And just as he was

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finishing searching the spy, he chanced to look at the police dog and saw under his long bushy hair a leather collar fastened round his neck. For some reason he took it off and examined it. And lo and behold! folded between the lining and the outside he found other dispatches but they were in cipher.

"At this moment I heard stealthy footsteps approaching and we



just had time to sneak farther into the woods when another Russian soldier appeared and close on his heels was another police dog. The soldier passed us unheeded, taking my master for a

bush. Not so the dog. He smelled me and also my master, and in the twinkling of an eye was upon me. He was three times my size and one of those long, wire-haired dogs with short, pointed ears, sharp nose and sharper teeth. He should have been named Sharp, for of all the dogs I ever came in contact with, this breed of dog is the sharpest witted for police service.

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"But luckily for me, when he flew at my throat, his teeth closed not on my throat, which would have ended my life then and there, but on my metal collar and the tin box. He bit so hard that he broke the points off several of his teeth. And while he was preparing for a second bite and his master was approaching to bayonet me, my master bayoneted him as he was leaning against my master thinking he was a bush. The soldier fell dead. With the next thrust my master killed the dog and then we both hurried back to camp with no more mishaps, where we arrived just as the sun was coming up. And I think that was one of the closest calls to being killed I had while in the war, but of course I had many others.

"I thank you all for caring to hear my story and will now bid you all good-night."


"My, oh me!" sighed an old cow. "I am all in a quiver from hearing that exciting tale and I don't believe I have drawn a long breath since he began speaking."

"Nor I!" replied the cow by her side, while a third one said: "And here they are starting out to cross the continent in quest of new adventures. Wouldn't you think they had had enough excitement and narrow escapes to last them for the rest of their lives?"

"I surely would," said the fourth cow.

CHAPTER XI

UNEXPECTED HAPPENINGS

UTTON was about to begin to tell them one of his thrilling adventures when several policemen appeared and began clubbing and driving the animals out of the park. One of them said, "Sure and I would like to know how these animals got into this park without me seein' um. Somebody must have drove um in thinking it was a free pasture." Another one said, "But did ye ever see such a motley bunch? There are cows, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, cats and dogs. Will ye tell me where they come from? When I just saw um I thought I must be dreamin'."

"I did sure!" called out the first policeman.

"Hey, there, stop runnin' over them flower beds, will ye?"

It was astonishing how all the animals seemed to disappear so suddenly. One would have thought the earth had opened and swallowed them whole. But Billy, Stubby, Nannie and Button had started for the Northern Pacific railroad track, which road they were to follow all the way to the Pacific coast. The gray

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cat showed them the way so they would not get on the wrong track as there were so many it would be hard to tell which was the right one. But the grey cat knew them well. So after that they said good-by to the cat and thanked him for all the trouble he had gone to to entertain them.

"Not at all! Not at all! It was no trouble I assure you, but a pleasure to have the honor of introducing three such distinguished travelers to my friends."

"Toot! Toot!" whistled a train behind them, and they jumped off the track just in time to save themselves from being run over. And as they stood at the side of the track, they read on the cars these signs which had been stretched the whole length of each one:

"Ringling Brothers Three Ring Circus."

"Gee Willikins!" exclaimed Billy. "If here isn't the very circus I used to act in! Let's stay over, Chums, and see if we can't meet some of our old friends. It has been so many years that probably some of them are dead or sold to other circuses, but there are sure to be one or two of them left."

"Charmed to stay over!" said Button.

"Delighted, I am sure!" replied Stubby.

So the four of them ran down the track after the train until it came to a halt at its unloading platform. Then they pushed forward to the cars that held the wild animals and waited for their

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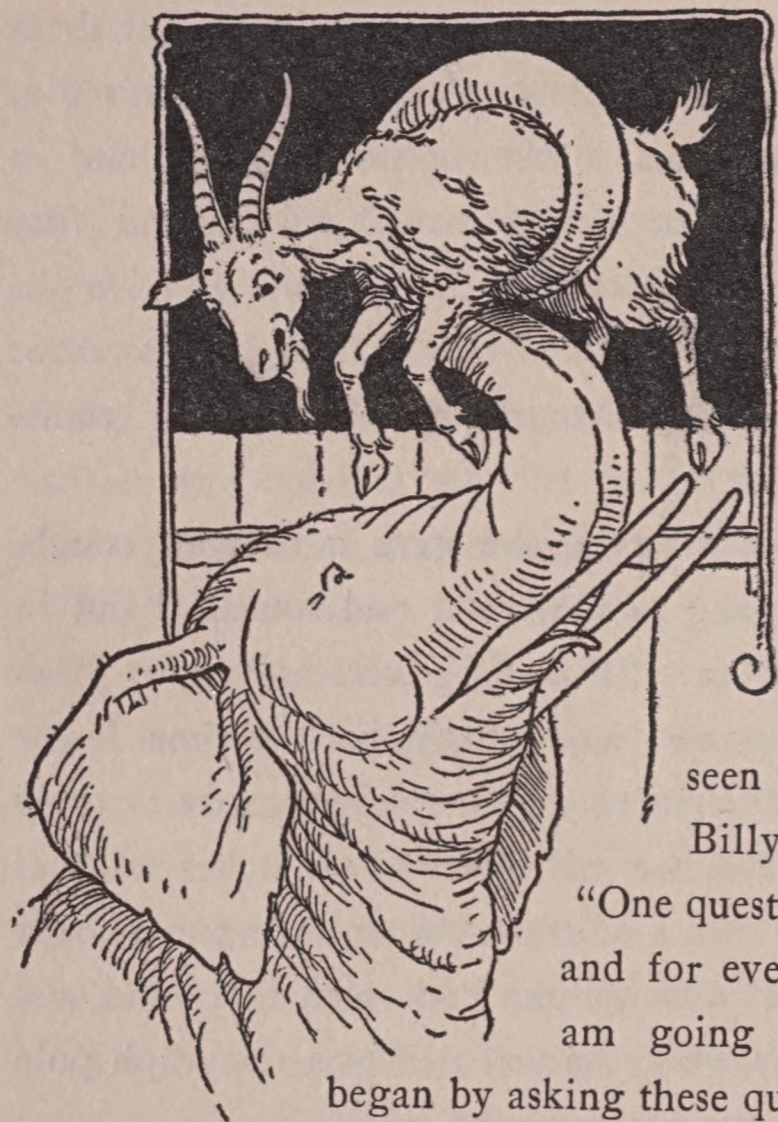
cages to be run off the train. Of course their cages were all shut up tightly with only breathing places at the top, so the people could not see the animals unless they paid to get into the circus. But the elephants and camels were so big they had not shut them up, and who should Billy see walking off the train but his old, old friend Jumbo, the oldest and finest specimen of elephant in America. He must have been nearly two hundred and fifty years old, his keeper said. Elephants frequently live to be that age and sometimes three hundred. After Jumbo came Maggie, dear old complaining Maggie, the old maid camel of the flock.

When she saw Billy and Nannie, she gave a nervous cough, stretched her neck out as long as she could and squeaked out in her complaining cracked voice: "Billy Whiskers as sure as I am alive! I am really glad to see you, though the last time I saw you I remember I was so furious at you that I was ready to chew the hair off your back. But we will bury the hatchet and let bygones be bygones." Just then a most terrific bellowing was heard coming from the elephants. Old Jumbo had spied Billy and was calling to him to come over where he was tied to a telegraph pole until the circus people had time to erect the tents.

So Billy hurried over to where he was and introduced Nannie, Stubby and Button to him. And while they were taking in his

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great size, he seized Billy round the middle of his body with his trunk and held him high in the air over his head, and then let out a trumpeting that nearly deafened poor Billy.



"If you don't say you are as glad to see me as I am to see you, I will crush every bone in your body!" trumpeted the elephant. Then the good-natured beast set Billy on his feet and began asking questions by the yard, like this: How was Nannie? Where had he been since they last met? Had he seen anything of the war? until Billy called a halt by saying,

"One question at a time, if you please, and for every question you ask me, I am going to ask you one." Billy

began by asking these questions as fast as he could:

"Have you the same ringmaster that I butted into the mud puddle? Is that green parrot that hated me so still alive? Is it better or worse

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being with a circus these days than it was years ago when I was with you?"

"Why, Billy Whiskers, how did you ever happen to get here?" heehawed a little burro. And turning, Billy beheld his old friend Bettina, the smallest burro on earth possessed with the longest ears, it was said, and the loudest voice.

"Why, Bettina! Are you still with the circus? I thought you must be owned by some private party long ere this."

"And are you still traveling alone and doing as you please?" asked Bettina.

"No, I am not alone this time. I am with my wife and friends," and Billy baaed for Nannie, Stubby and Button to come over and be introduced.

The elephant, camel, burro and the Chums were all standing talking and reminiscing on the long ago and asking after friends, when whiz! a rope flew over Billy's head and he found himself lassoed and a voice saying: "That is the time I caught you off your guard, you old rascal! You see I remembered you of old and knew if I wanted to catch you I must do it quickly and talk to you afterwards, or you would kick up your heels in my face and be off. And thereby the circus would miss one of the best performers and drawing cards it ever had. Well, how are you, old fellow, and how has the world been using you? But I need not

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ask, for my eyes tell me you look younger and more frisky than you did when last I saw you, and that was several years ago. I do hope your temper has cooled down some since last we met, for I have a distinct recollection of how fiery it was and of being butted over a fence and you running away from me."

Just then Stubby and Button each felt a rope slip around their necks and they found themselves like Billy—caught.

When Billy saw this, he had to laugh to think how easily the three of them had been captured. They did not lasso Nannie for they knew she would follow Billy wherever he went.

Stubby, who hated performing either in the circus or the movies, was most downcast, while Button looked mad enough to chew tacks.

"Cheer up, Chums! The best is yet to come!" said Billy. "I hear that this circus is on its way to the Pacific Coast, so if we stay with it we can be carried out there on their train instead of hoofing it. And all we will have to do will be to perform a trick or two each day. In the meantime they will feed and take good care of us clear to the Coast."

"I don't want to be taken care of!" whined Stubby. "I want to take care of myself and live a free life even if it is a harder one. And I am going to run away the first chance I get."

"So am I!" meowed Button. "Me for the wild free life!"

"Those are generally my sentiments too," said Billy, "but not

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in this case when thousands of miles of treeless plains, semi-deserts and alkali pools are before me to hoof it over when I could ride. Me for diplomacy until I get across the continent and when once in California, the free life again."

"I guess you are right after all, Billy. When I think of those sandy wastes with only alkali water to drink, which means death, I believe I would prefer to perform a few tricks, much as I dislike to, to enduring cold nights, hunger and lonesomeness out on the plains," spoke up Stubby.

"And I say the same," said Button.

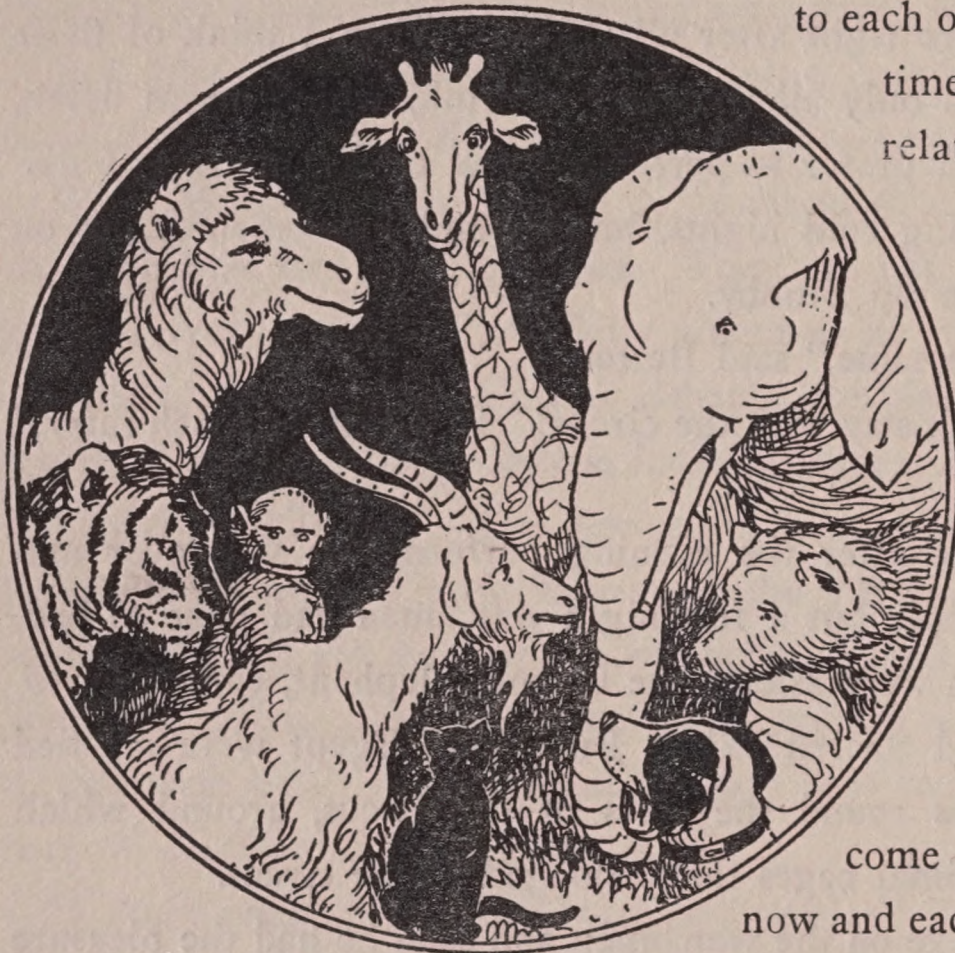
"Oh, yes, do let's stay with the circus! It will be so much safer," said Nannie.

Late that night after the evening performance was over and all the circus people but a few night watchmen had gone to bed, and most of them were asleep, the Chums, elephant, camel, burro, giraffe, zebra and Sacred White Bull from Egypt were all tied at equal distances round the sides of the circus, around which ring were the animal cages that belonged to the circus.

Billy kept his eye on the watchman and soon he had the pleasure of seeing him throw himself on a bundle of straw and go fast asleep, and presently begin to snore. Billy had been waiting to assure himself that the watchman was sound asleep. When he heard the snores he stood up and walked as near the center of the

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tent as his rope would permit. Then he baaed softly for the other animals to join him. And they all came as near as their ropes would let them. Then putting their heads down close to the ground so their voices would not carry so far, they began to talk



to each other and have the time of their lives relating the experiences they had had and exchanging gossip. Presently Billy said: "Say, fellows, I tell you what let's do! Form a Club and every night we will

come here as we are now and each relate the story of his life up to the present time. It will be most interesting and instructive to those that are listening. For just see from what different quarters of the globe we have come. Here is old Jumbo who came from Asia two hundred and fifty years ago. He was

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old before you were born. Then here is Maggie, who has crossed the Sahara desert, which is in Africa. And Polly from the jungles of South America; the zebra and giraffe from Africa, Big Ben, the baboon, also from Africa, the kangaroo from Australia, and Stubby, Button and myself from North America. So you see we have all the continents and one of the islands of the globe represented here.

"This being a Club, we must have a president, secretary, treasurer, speaker and directors, elected to office by the members. The dues to be paid in food, not money, as we animals have no use for money. The dues of the Club are to be paid monthly instead of yearly, as we may not all be together for a year, owing to the circus breaking up into four parts to do smaller towns. What say you all to my proposal?"

Wild bellowings from the Sacred Bull, trumpeting from the elephant, growls from the baboon and heehaws from the burro; whinneyings from the zebra, squeaks from the parrot, barks from Stubby and meows from Button were here accompanied by the stamping of feet in lieu of the clapping of hands to show their approval of Billy's suggestion to have a Club.

"Hush!" hissed Button. "We are awakening the night watchman!"

Immediately there was dead silence and each animal went back

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to its place and stood stock still as if sleeping, while the watchman rubbed his eyes, looked round and seeing all the animals in their places, thought he had dreamed he heard them bellowing and stamping.

As soon as he fell over on the straw again and they heard him snore, they all came back to the middle of the ring where they were before, and Bettina, the burro, suggested that they elect Billy Whiskers president. But he refused to take it, saying the elephant should be president as he was much the oldest member.

"Then you must be speaker," they all said. This he consented to be. Stubby was elected secretary and was to notify the members by word of mouth instead of writing them. Button was treasurer and was to look after the food until it was eaten.

The directors of this Club were to be the animals that could get out of their cages to attend the Club meetings. Those who could not were to be honorary members. Polly was elected to fly from cage to cage and sit on the top and tell the animals in them what had been said at the last meeting.

Now the Club was organized, all it needed was a name. Each director selected one and when they were voted on, the Good Fellowship Club had the most votes. Then the next thing to do was for them all to go round to the different animals in the cages and

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tell them about the Club and ask them if they wished to join and be honorary members.

The business of starting a Club being finished, the animals went back to their places to lie down and see if they could not get a little sleep before the circus was astir in the morning. Polly awoke first and just as day was dawning, she flew from cage to cage and told the animals in them about the new Club. Every animal in the entire circus joined except the hyenas and wild boars. The other animals were glad they did not, because these animals were much disliked, the hyenas because they ate human flesh,—and the boars for their boarish disposition.

When the names of the members were read off at the next Club meeting, it was found they had as members walruses, lions, bears, sacred bulls, hippopotami, wild cats, tigers, wolves, camels, giraffes, elephants, dogs, leopards, elk, water buffaloes, rhinoceri, foxes and angora goats. The only ones of the monkey troop invited were the big baboons and chimpanzees. The members were afraid that if they invited the smaller monkeys to join they would chatter and make such a racket that it would waken the night watchman, who would break up the meeting.

They were to assemble once a week on Wednesday evenings when not on the road. Should they be on the move, the meeting would

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be postponed until the first evening they went in camp. It was decided that the first talk was to be by the president, the elephant, who was to tell them all he knew about elephants. The next talk was to be by the longest necked giraffe in the circus, followed by the oldest zebra.

CHAPTER XII

THE ELEPHANT'S STORY



HE next night being Wednesday, the day they had decided to have their Club meeting, all the animals that had joined the club appeared promptly at the appointed hour, which was eleven thirty, in the middle of the circus tent. This tent being rather small and very quiet at that hour of the night, it was found that all the animals in the cages surrounding the ring could hear plainly every word the speaker said. And the night watchman being such a sound sleeper, their conversation did not awaken him. So without any fear the elephant began his story.

The Elephant's Story

"Dear friends, I am about to tell you not only the story of my life which will seem a long one to you, as I am in my two hundred and fiftieth year, but many things about elephants. As this is to be a Club not only for amusement, but for education as well, I hope you will bear with me if I seem tedious. It is astonishing how little any

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of us know of the lives and habits of our friends in their free and native state in the countries where they live so far away from us. All we know of them is just what we see of them day by day in the circus, so in my talk to-night I will try to tell you as much as I can about elephants, leaving out all unnecessary details.

“The first thing of importance in my life I remember distinctly was walking between my father and mother (two magnificent looking animals) behind a herd of nine elephants in a wonderful, huge, beautiful forest in Siam, a country in Southern Asia bordering on the Indian Ocean. While walking along I was wondering how the big trees five and six feet in diameter get there with their long limbs and good tasting leaves. For while I was only a baby elephant three or four months of age, I distinctly remember admiring the many different colored and shaped flowers that bloomed on the trailing vines and seemed to festoon themselves everywhere. But beautiful and sweet smelling as the flowers on these vines were, my father and mother did not appreciate them for they tore them rudely aside as the ropelike festoons hindered their progress through the jungle. I have often heard my father complain to my mother that these vines and the sharp thorns on the thorn bushes, with the rotting logs under one's feet, quite spoiled all the pleasure of walking in the jungle, and he would greatly prefer walking on the plains if it were not for the broiling hot sun and no trees to shade one.

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"Just then a loud trumpeting was heard from the leader of the herd away ahead to warn the herd that there were hunters in sight looking for them. Quick as a flash my father pointed with his trunk to a thick, dark clump of trees and told my mother to take me and hide there while he went to reconnoiter. All elephants are very brave when their young are attacked and will defend them with their lives. The male elephants always try to protect the females and young by keeping them in the rear of the herd when on the move, while they march ahead.

"My mother and I were scarcely concealed behind the big trees, drooping vines and low bushes when I saw a tall, slender native with only a breech cloth round his loins push his head through the bushes close beside the place where we had been standing when the leader trumpeted his warning. This man held in one hand a long spear with a sharp arrowhead top, and a coiled rope in the other. And I heard my mother give a frightened sigh and say to herself: 'The king's head elephant hunter! He has been on our track for days. We surely are lost for he always gets his prey. He has captured four of our most splendid elephants recently.'

"At that moment the man happened to cast his eyes down and I saw a slow, cruel smile of triumph spread over his face as his big red lips opened and disclosed his sharp, white teeth. He had discovered our footprints in the soft mud at his feet. Looking

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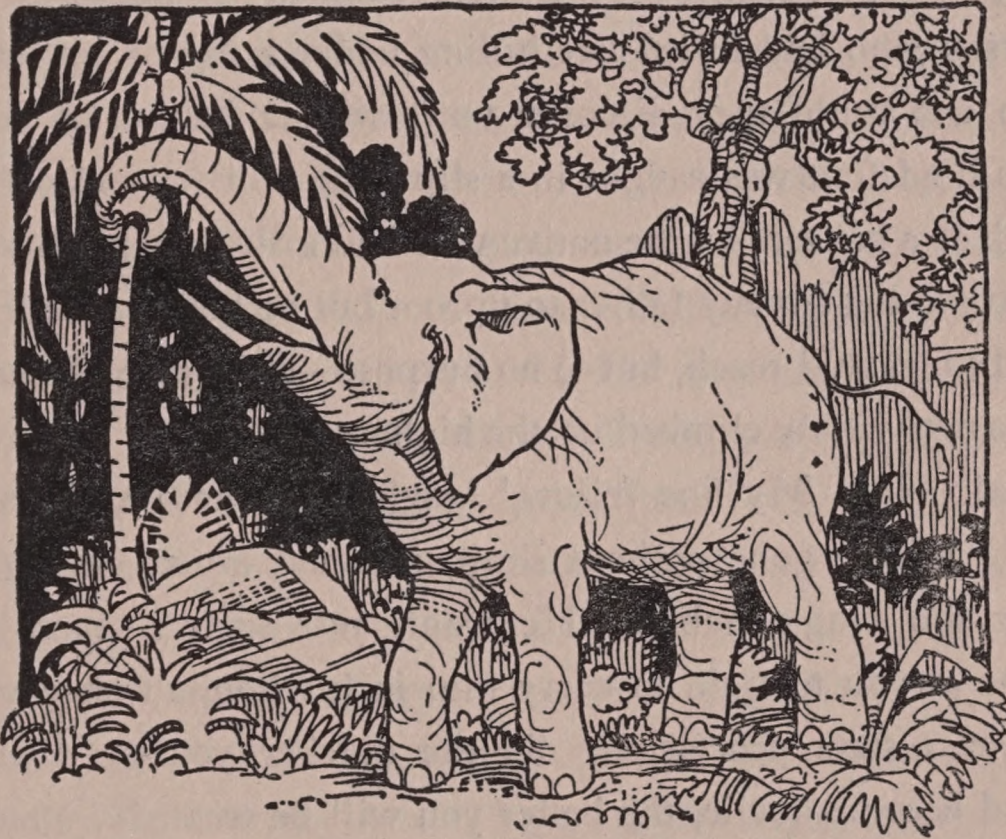
around quickly in all directions and peering into the bushes and dark places in the forest, I felt he must see us, he looked so straight in our direction. Then he drew himself to his full height and sniffed the air, and again that cruel, triumphant smile lit his jaw. My mother, who was watching him as closely as I, drew in a frightened breath and whispered to me: 'He has scented us! We are lost! But he may pass us by. Don't move a muscle or take a deep breath.'

"Closely following the tracks, nearer and nearer he drew to us without stopping until he came to the place where my father's tracks left ours and went north. Here the man hesitated and looked closely as if to decide which of the tracks to follow. Then he lay flat on the ground with his ear close to it and listened, and when he got up he had another of his hateful smiles on his face, straightened himself and again sniffing the air, he started and came straight as an arrow to the place where we were hiding. But as he separated the bushes behind which we were standing, my mother stretched out her trunk, caught him around the neck and threw him over her head. I heard him go crashing between the big limbs of the trees and fall to the ground.

" 'There, *he* is done for,' said my mother, 'but it was a close call. His friends, if they ever do find him, will discover him dead from a broken neck.'

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“Just then she gave a groan of pain and sank to the ground, but as she fell she sent out an agonizing trumpet of pain and warning to my father and the herd. By a miracle the man’s neck had not been broken and on regaining his feet he had thrown his sharp,



murderous spear at her and it had penetrated her back in a tender part and killed her.

“I was wondering what to do when my father, in answer to her death cry, came charging back, followed by the leader of the herd and two other strong elephants. Discovering my mother was dead,

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they became furious and began looking for the person who had killed her, for they knew on seeing the spear how she had met her death as they had been hunted so much and knew from experience what those cruel spears would do. They began tearing up young trees by the roots and stamping the ground in the hopes of finding the person who had killed her hiding under a log or up in a tree. But no one could they discover until with a bellow of rage my father's hind foot was caught in a slip knot of a rope thrown from the limb of a big tree by the native who had killed my mother. The tree was too big for my father to uproot but he began to tear off all the limbs he could reach, but to no purpose—as he tore off the lower ones the native only climbed up the higher.

“‘Ha! Ha! My fine fellow,’ laughed the native, ‘I have you at last! I have gone without sleep, rest and much food to catch you for the king’s stables. He wants just such a good-looking elephant as you to train to carry him in his houdah on your back in the next state procession. So the quicker you get over your fury and become docile, the better you will be treated. Yours will be a life of ease, and no pulling of heavy logs in the river out in the broiling hot sun. You will have a cool, shady pagoda to stay in when the sun is up and a cool deep marble bath to bathe in, and plenty of good food to eat. What more could you wish? And when you take my master for a ride on your back in his houdah you

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will head the procession of elephants with the nobility and flower of Siam on elephants behind you. Your houdah or seat for the king and all its trappings will be of crimson velvet embroidered in gold, set with precious stones, while theirs will be of silver. Come now, stop that struggling or I shall have to tie up another leg and fasten you to a tree. You won't? Then here goes!' and he put his fingers to his lips and gave the sharpest, most penetrating whistle I ever heard or hope to hear. From the bushes on all sides of us appeared other half naked huntsmen, bringing a trained elephant with them to help them subdue my father. And with the elephant's help they soon had my poor tired father hobbled so he could scarcely move. And here the head huntsman left my father with the natives and returned to the king's palace to acquaint him with his find.

"Elephants are also caught by drawing a herd into a strongly constructed enclosure by frightening them with noise and fire until the poor things are so confused they don't know where they are going. Once in the enclosure, with the help of tame decoy elephants, they are quickly fastened to trees by tying one leg at a time. Here they are kept until they become docile and tame enough to be taught what the natives wish them to do.

"There is one interesting thing about elephants and it is this: If for any reason one elephant leaves a herd or is driven from it, he is not allowed to join another or come back to his own. He is forced

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to lead a solitary, lonesome life and he soon becomes morose and ill-tempered and takes delight in destroying everything. These elephants are called rogues.

"And while I am about it, I will tell you a few more facts about elephants before I go back to what happened to myself.

"The tusks of elephants are nothing more than enormously elongated front teeth. They grow to be seven or eight feet long and often weigh from one hundred to two hundred and fifty pounds. This with the weight of the animal is considerable, as they frequently weigh from four thousand to nine thousand pounds. Their usual height is from nine to ten feet but they have been known to reach the height of fifteen feet. Though so large and strong, they are rather delicate in captivity and require being fed with care. When working they are fed two hundredweight of green food, half a bushel of grain and forty gallons of water each day. When once tamed and trained, they are of immense value in the East where they do the heavy work like pulling and hauling logs, road building and so on as well as being used by royalty on state occasions to carry them on their backs in gaudy houdahs, a kind of seat with a canopy or top over it. At such times the elephants are bedecked in great splendor with head pieces of gold and silver set with precious stones.



ON THAT LONG TABLE SET FOR A HUNDRED FIFTY PERSONS, EACH ANIMAL
FOUND SOMETHING TO HIS TASTE.

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

"You have heard of the Sacred White Elephants? Well, there is a dispute about them. Some authorities say they are simply albinos, which means a person or animal all white with red eyes. Others say the white hair is due to a skin disease. Whichever way it is, the people of India consider them sacred and great care and attention is lavished on them. They have pagodas of their own, cooling baths and servants to look after them.

Elephants are found in Africa, Asia, and Ceylon. The African elephant differs from the species in Asia in being taller, having larger ears and a different shaped forehead. The African elephant is hunted for its tusks which are of great value when made up into ivory trinkets, toilet articles and other things. The natives of Africa in the jungle count their wealth by the number and size of the elephant tusks they have. They are more fierce than the Asia elephants and are not used as beasts of burden so much on that account.

"Now I have given you a few statistics about elephants in general and will go back to where my father was caught and I was still undiscovered beside my dead mother.

"As night came on I began to grow terribly frightened, for in the darkness I could see the blazing eyes of wild beasts around and snakes peering at me through the bushes. They had been attracted

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

by the smell of blood and were only waiting to pounce upon my mother and eat her when they found out whether she was alive and sleeping or dead.

"The natives had built a fire and were preparing their supper not twenty feet from my father who stood stock still now, having



completely worn himself out fighting and straining to loosen the ropes that bound him. The natives' fire made a patch of light in the inky black forest and I was truly thankful for it, as it made me less afraid. But the blazing eyes kept creeping nearer and nearer where I stood until I was trying to make up my mind to brave the

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natives and run to my father when my mind was made up in a hurry. Hearing the leaves above rustle, I looked up and what should I see but a big tiger about to spring on me. With one bound I was out of the bushes and running toward my father. On seeing me he caressed me with his trunk and told me not to be afraid but to be brave. My sudden appearance surprised the natives very much and with one accord they jumped up and came toward us and before I knew it, I was tied up.

"The natives were very good to us and when my father saw that they did not intend to hurt either of us, he soon had confidence in them. At the end of two weeks the natives thought my father was docile and tame enough for them to start out of the forest with him to the king's stables.

"I have had many, many masters and trainers in my long life, but none that I loved as I did the first one that brought me out of the jungle.

"I should like to tell you about my trip to America in the big ships across the oceans, but I see I have already talked over my time. So thanking you for your kind attention, I will bid you good-night," and with much applause Jumbo returned to the side of the ring to listen to what the next speaker had to say, which all had voted must be Billy Whiskers.

CHAPTER XIII

BILLY WHISKERS' STORY



HEN the animals were all quiet again, Billy said:

“Kind friends, I think I will tell you of an experience Nannie and I had when we were on a ranch out in New Mexico and I was leader of a large flock of sheep. You know that most flocks of sheep have several big goats to help guard the sheep against the attack of wolves.

“We had been doing this for a long time and had grown weary of the dangerous, monotonous life. We decided to run away, cross the mountain and make our way East. This ranch was directly at the foot of the Rocky Mountains and as this was a good time of the year to travel, there being plenty of grass and water, and little snow on top of the mountains, we determined to start immediately. We only waited for the herders to drive the sheep into the corral for the night and then we started.

“We had been out about ten days climbing straight up and up, higher and higher, and the nights were getting colder and colder, and the food scarcer and scarcer. We determined we must make a

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

rush trip the next day and get over the top of the mountain or we would be snowbound and starve to death. That night we went to bed very early so as to be up at sunrise. As luck would have it, we had found a small cave hid away up the side of the mountain among the rocks which would protect us against the high winds, and we were congratulating ourselves on finding it for now we could have a good sleep undisturbed by wind or rain.

"We must have been asleep for three or four hours when Nannie awakened me by huddling up close and whispering in my ear: 'Oh, Billy, I am so afraid! I thought I heard wolves howling in the valley!'

"As she finished speaking I heard them myself and from the howls I judged there must be six or eight. But as you know the howl of one wolf sounds like two or three, so I could not be sure. Of one thing I *was* sure and that was that they were on our track and coming fast, and two goats against six or eight wolves hadn't much show. The only advantage we had was that we were in a cave and so protected on three sides. If we could hold the entrance and keep them out, we might be able to pick them off one by one.

"I had some hope of saving our lives this way but should they decide to attack in a bunch we could not hope to fight them off. Nannie would be practically no help unless she got over her fright to some extent, for now she was panic-stricken and could not think.

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And one wants his brain in good working order when fighting wolves.

"On, on came the cruel beasts, nearer and nearer, and Nannie shook so by this time she could not even stand up. I knew this would never do so I said: 'Nannie, my dear, unless you stand up

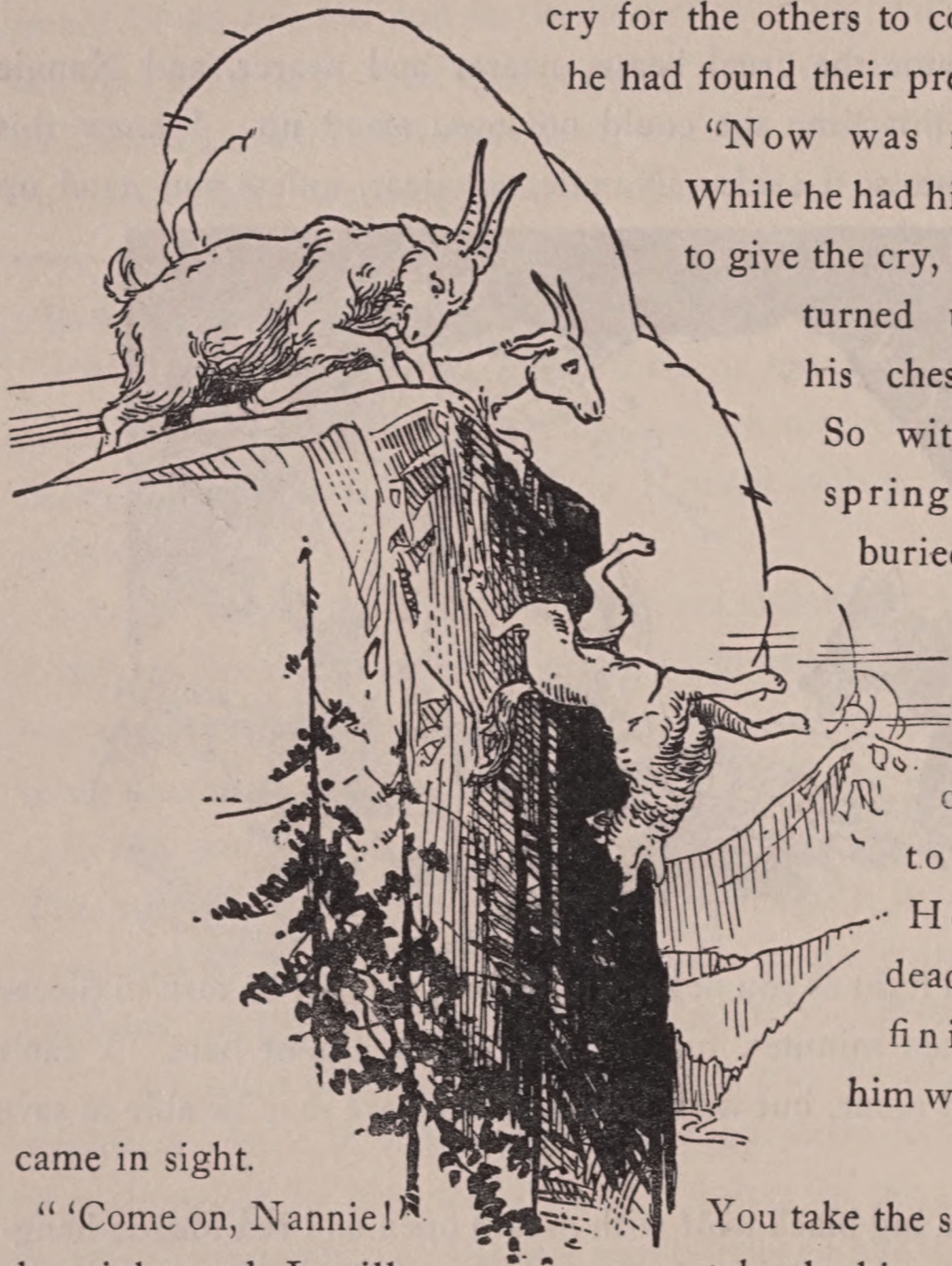


and fight, and fight as you never did before, we will be torn to pieces in less than ten minutes, for the wolves are almost here. I can't fight them off alone, but with your assistance we may be able to save our lives.'

"Just then a big black wolf with mouth open and red tongue hanging out between sharp white teeth, appeared at the entrance of the

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

cave. As if gloating over us, he raised his head and gave the pack cry for the others to come on; that he had found their prey.



"Now was my chance. While he had his head raised to give the cry, his eyes were turned upward and his chest expanded. So with a mighty spring forward I buried my sharp horns in his chest, piercing clear through to his heart. He dropped dead. I had just finished with him when two more

came in sight.

"Come on, Nannie! the right and I will.

You take the smaller one to take the big one to the left.

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Be sure to spring upon them the minute they reach the spot in the path where that big stone is. It will take them so by surprise that it will give us the advantage, for they expect us to run away instead of fight.'

"And now that there was real danger at hand, Nannie bounded up as she always did and she and I sprang at the wolves at the same instant and knocked them over the steep cliff down into the canyon below. And we could hear them rolling with the stones they loosened, down, down, down into the rocky stream below.

"Now two more wolves came from one direction and three from another, and none of them knew what had happened to their comrades for the killings had taken place out of sight and in such quick time that none of the wolves had let out so much as a peep.

" 'Keep close to me, Nannie, so I can help you a little,' I said.

"Just then the wolves spied us, and they all gave a howl of pleasure and quickened their pace. 'Now is where we fight as we never did before, or die,' I thought.

"With mouth open and tail swinging high in air, the foremost and largest one of the five jumped straight for me. He was so much larger than I that for a second he bore me to the ground with his teeth in my neck, but as luck would have it the collar I always wore kept the wolf from closing his mouth so his sharp teeth only grazed

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my skin instead of sinking into my throat as the wolf intended they should.

"Nannie, on seeing me down and the wolf on top of me with blood flowing from my wounds, thought of course I was killed. And forgetting herself, she charged on the wolf, and while he was preparing for another bite at my neck, something ran in his side and he knew no more. Nannie's sharp horns had pierced his heart. She had just time to pull her horns out of his side when the other wolves were upon her.

"Seeing them coming, I squirmed from under the heavy dead wolf that was pinning me down and was on my feet beside Nannie before the wolves reached her. But what was our surprise to see the wolves stop short when within six feet of us, lift their noses in the air, sniff and start past us on a gallop. The wolves had smelled the blood of the first wolf that had been killed and Nannie and I had no charms for them compared to fresh blood, even though it was the blood of one of their own pack. They fell upon the wolves Nannie and I had killed and fought and tore at the carcasses until not a shred of meat was left on any of the bones.

" 'Now is our time to escape, Nannie, while the wolves are gorging themselves with fresh meat,' I said, and so we started up the side of the mountain in double quick time. By morning we had reached

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the summit and crossed over and were down the other side beyond the snow line before we stopped traveling. But we had to halt and get our breath and rest very often as one has to in high altitudes.

“Needless to say, we reached the valley in safety or we would not be here now. I thank you for your kind attention.”

At the close of Billy's story he stepped into the center of the ring and announced that he had been loose all day and allowed to roam at will, and while hanging around the kitchen tent, he had heard the night watchman, cooks and other caretakers of the circus talking about a big ball that was to be given in the skating rink in town that evening for the circus people. They had all declared their intentions of going, for they were quite sure everything would be all right at the circus for the two or three hours they would be away, and the owner of the circus would be none the wiser.

“The cooks are to make cakes and ice-cream, broil and glaze ham and other meats for them to have when they come back from the ball. And it is all to be set on the table before they go, so all they will have to do when they return will be to make hot coffee and then sit down and eat. Now I propose we go over and eat up that supper while they are away. They will think some hoodlums from the

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town came out and did it. It will be great fun and give you animals a chance for once in your lives to taste the food humans eat. You may not like it; still you may as I have yet to meet the animal that does not like sugar or salt," said Billy.

"Your proposition sounds fine for a lark, but will you kindly tell us, Mr. Billy, how we are to get there when we are all tied and shut in a circus tent?"

"Easily enough! Half of you animals don't know your own strength or power or you would not be here. Now listen to my plan. The elephant, camel and moose will have to pull with all their strength on their ropes until the pegs in the ground to which they are tied fly out. I know they will. You all just think you can not uproot them, so you never have tried. So much for what thought will do for an animal as well as for a person. What we truly think turns out to be true if we only think hard enough in the right way."

"Those of you who are not noted for your strength but for your sharp teeth will gnaw your ropes in two, and when you are all free we will hie us to the banquet tent."

"But how are we to get out of this circus tent?" asked the giraffe.

"The elephant will stick his sharp tusk through it and tear a hole in it large enough for you big animals to squeeze through."

"It sounds very plausible but I don't believe it can be done," said the elephant.

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"'Fraidy cat! 'Fraidy cat!" squeaked the parrot.

"Shut up, Polly! Someone might hear you and then you would spoil the whole party!"

"Come now, you animals with sharp teeth, begin to gnaw on your ropes!" called Billy.

The poor giraffe was in despair. So was the zebra, for they both had large but flat teeth and could not chew a rope in two in a month.

"Don't worry, you two; I'll fix it so you can get loose. I'll chew your ropes for you," offered Stubby, "and I'll get Button to help me."

And then for many minutes all you could hear in the circus tent was a sound like thousands of rats gnawing. Their jaws were getting pretty tired from this unusual work when Billy thought of an excellent plan to lighten the task. He ran out of the tent and over to where the grain for the horses was kept. And here he found over a hundred rats eating the grain that had been spilled when the horses had been fed.

He ran in their midst and said: "Stop eating a minute and listen to me, good friends! You can eat this stuff every day for it is always here, but I have a plan whereby you can get dainties to eat that you love with no fear of poison or of being caught. But before I tell you where you can get it, you must do me a favor. It is an easy one that will take but ten minutes. Then you will be free until

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

morning to eat the dainties I have told you of if you so wish. Will you do it or not?"

The spokesman rat asked: "Where are these dainties you speak of to be had?"



"I cannot tell you until you have done what I ask you to do. Should I tell you first, you might give me the laugh by running off and eating them up before you did the favor I am asking."

"Well, what is the favor?" asked another old rat.

"It is to gnaw a few ropes in two. Come, hurry and decide for time flies, which makes the

time all the shorter for your feast. Think of it, cakes, pies, pudding, meats, cheese of many kinds, all for the eating, and no danger! Will you or will you not come?"

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"Yes, we will come. Now lead the way to where the ropes are you want chewed."

And I know even the men and the girl in the moon would have laughed had they chanced to look down and had seen a big white goat leading an army of rats into a circus tent.

When the animals saw Billy coming with the rats they were too astonished to speak, and before they had time to ask any questions the rats were gnawing the ropes like mad.

"Billy, for plans and strategy you certainly take the cake!" said the elephant. "You should have been human. With your brain you would have made a wonderful major general for some army."

In a jiffy the ropes fell apart and then the rats attacked the hole the elephant had made in the tent and helped him to tear it. When the hole was big enough for them to squeeze through, Billy said:

"Now follow me, rats and animals, and I will lead you to the festive board where all the goodies are spread out for you to feast on them."

Once inside the tent every animal and rat tasted the things that looked most tempting to him. The leaf eaters ate the salad; the meat eaters, the ham and cold tongue; the rats ate the different cheeses and cakes; but the giraffe, being thirsty, was looking for a drink of water when he spied the ice-cream freezer. While nosing

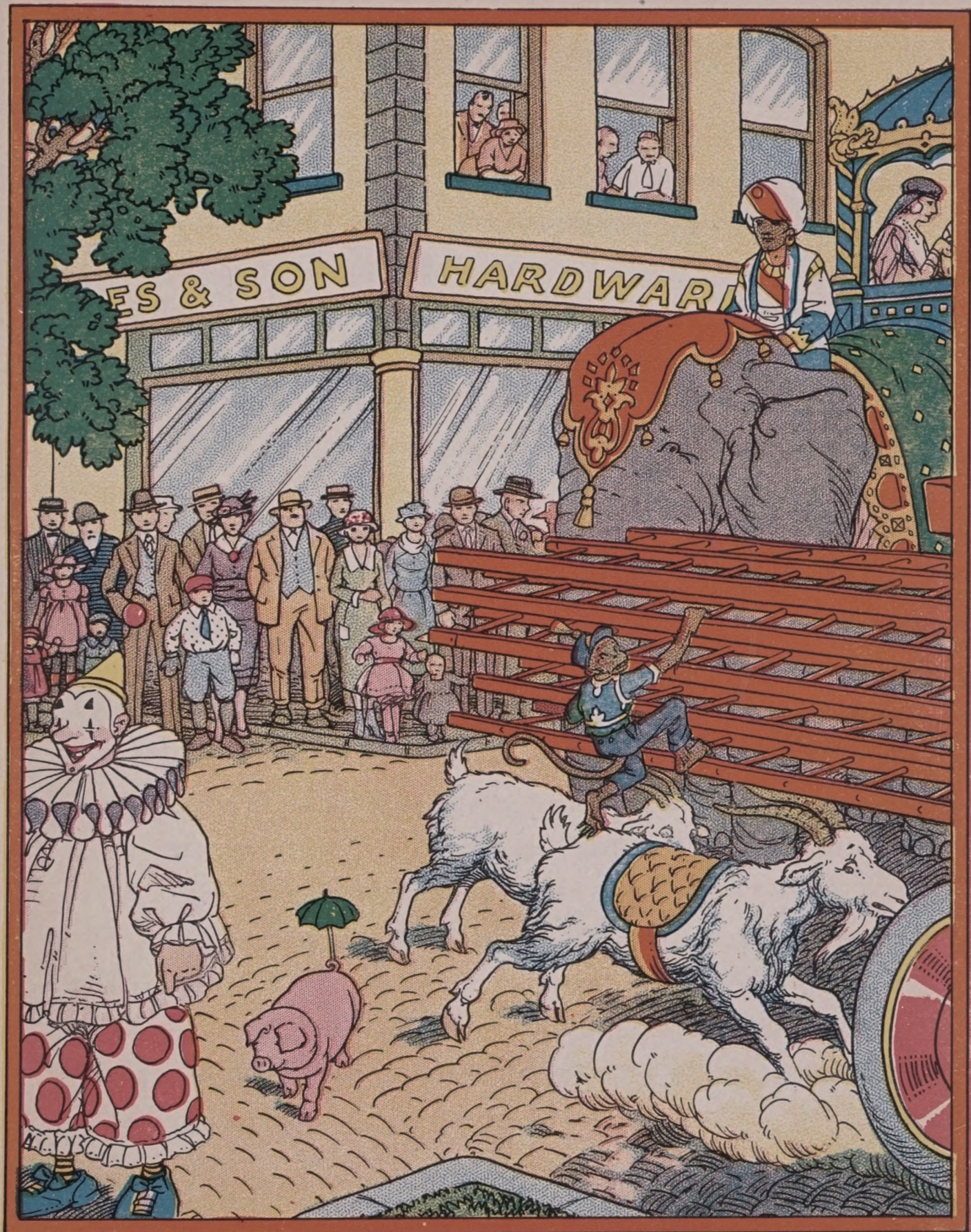
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around he accidentally knocked the lid off, so he stuck his tongue in to taste it. Being hot and thirsty, it tasted good and felt cool to his throat. He was thus amusing himself when Billy found him. He would lick up a mouthful and then stretch his neck up as high as it would go and shut his eyes to enjoy the cool, sweet stream running down his long neck. He called to the elephant to come and try it, which he did but the elephant did not like it. He much preferred the salted nuts and went from place to place eating the nuts in the individual dishes.

The camel liked the sweet cakes and so it was that on that long table set for a hundred fifty persons, each animal found something to his taste. And those greedy animals and rats did not leave until there was not a morsel of food left and the plates were licked as clean as if they had been washed.

On going to the flap of the tent to look out to see about what time it was, Billy spied a long, straggling line of people coming down the street straight for the tent. He recognized them as the circus people coming home from the ball.

It took but a minute for him to notify his friends and in less time than it takes to tell it, every animal and rat was out of the tent and hurrying as fast as fast could be to get back to their places in the tent before the night watchman got there or any of the returning crowd saw them. After they had seen that all the animals were back



"FOLLOW ME, NANNIE!" CALLED BILLY AND RAN UNDER THE HOOK-AND-LADDER AUTO.

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in their places standing beside their gnawed ropes, Billy and Stubby and Button ran back to the dining tent and secreted themselves so they could hear what the circus people said when they entered their tent and found the food all eaten.

The first to come was the head chef and one of the bareback lady riders. On throwing back the flap of the tent to show the lady what mountains of goodies he had prepared for the feast, the chef was struck dumb by the sight of the empty table. At first he thought there must be some practical joke about it and that someone had hidden the food and put down empty plates. So he rushed in and looked under the table to see if they had hidden the food there. But no! Then to the kitchen to look in the oven and cupboards for food, but no food appeared. He was wringing his hands and pulling his hair when the rest of the crowd arrived wanting to know what kind of a practical joke he called it to have no food and only an empty table to show an impatient crowd when they arrived from the ball hungry as wolves. Cries were heard of "Throw him in the river! Throw him in the river!"

"No! No! Stop that howling! Can't you see the poor man is beside himself at the loss of the supper? Don't you see he has played no joke on you, but someone else has played a joke on him?" said the lady with him. "But I am with you to find out who *did* play this mean trick.

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"Anyway, we can have some ice-cream, for I see the ice-cream freezer at the end of yonder table. Each get your saucer and spoon and I will serve you."

But alas! when she got there she found the top of the can on the floor and the ice-cream all gone.

"Who has done this? Who has done this?" they all asked one another but no one knew or could even guess. And they have not found out to this day and that was over a year ago.

The next day the circus was to be divided, half going to Duluth and half to Bismarck. All the animals were in a flutter to know how the division was to be made and who was going with whom.

CHAPTER XIV

POLLY AND THE MONKEY CAUSE TROUBLE



ABOUT the middle of the next morning the animals were discussing their next move and telling one another what they had heard their trainers and caretakers say of the places they were going and which animals were going to Duluth and which to Bismarck, when a scream rent the air and Polly began scolding and squeaking in her loudest and most angry voice.

The lion roared out: "Can't you be still and stop your squeaks for a few minutes at least? You chatter, chatter an endless chain of nonsense all day long and just when one is about to catch a little nap without being bothered by people sticking their canes and umbrellas into one's sides, you have to squeak as if you were being killed."

"Oh, don't talk to me, you old grouch! You need not think you are the *only* one that can make a noise in this circus! I guess you let out an ear splitting roar whenever *you* wish without asking permission or thinking if *you* will disturb any afternoon naps!" and

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Polly gave another of her discordant squeaks and flew up onto a trapeze that was hanging from the top of the tent.

"I guess you would squeak too if you had had a handful of feathers pulled out of your tail by a monkey," said the old maid camel.

"Oh! that is it, is it? The monkey is at his old tricks plaguing his enemy, the parrot," replied the lion.

Here the conversation was interrupted by squeaks and more squeaks, followed by the loud chattering of a monkey. Every animal in its cage and those tied in the ring looked up to where Polly and the monkey were having a terrible fight high on the trapeze. First Polly would be seen swinging from the under side by her bill, then the monkey. Then they would both sit on the bar and fight each other. Polly would peck with her bill and strike out with her claws while the monkey would slap her and grab out a handful of feathers.

At last Polly had a chance to spread her wings and fly from the trapeze into the passageway that led from this tent into another where the performers' dressing-rooms were. The monkey could not fly but he could do something almost as well. He could swing and jump, so he set the trapeze to swinging out farther and farther, then jumped and caught hold of a long rope that swung to the ground. This he caught and nimbly climbed down it. Once down, he ran

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into the passageway after Polly. Polly, turning, saw him coming as she was walking slowly along thinking she was rid of the monkey for a while at least. But when she saw him, her fright returned and with a squeak she spread her wings and flew until she saw an opening into one of the private dressing-rooms. Through this she flew and lit on the first thing she saw which, sad to relate, happened to be the golden head of the peroxide blonde bareback rider, who was in the act of bleaching her hair. She had the bottle raised over her head to pour some on her hair when Polly lit just where she was going to pour the liquid. Being so startled, she did not know what she was doing and poured the liquid just the same. It went all over Polly and slowly turned her green feathers to a bright golden color.



Then seeing the monkey and being deathly afraid of them, the

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circus girl threw the bottle at him and the rest of its contents spilled over the monkey, making him also a bright gold color.

On seeing this, Polly ha-ha'd with laughter but it was cut short when, happening to look down, she saw her own body slowly turning the same yellow the monkey's was. On perceiving this she began to squeak and cry, "Murder, murder!" while the frightened circus girl called "Help, help!" and the monkey squealed as loudly as he could to add to the confusion. Of course all the racket brought the circus people running to the tent to see who was being mistreated. Nor did their cries attract only the circus people, but the outside spectators and policemen as well. The people stopped to listen and stare while the policemen made a run for the tent.

When the monkey saw the first policeman coming down the passageway with club upraised, he ran toward the screaming circus girl and tried to hide under her dress. This of course made her cry "Help! Murder!" louder than ever and she kicked so hard she upset the chair she was sitting on. When the policeman appeared in the door she was lying on the floor under the overturned chair, still screaming. The police thought someone must have knocked her down with the chair and, perceiving no one in the room, took it for granted they must have made their escape by crawling under the tent, so he too crawled under. At that moment he saw a man running away from the tent as fast as he could, so he called to the

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

crowd, "Stop him! Stop him!" But too late—the man had cleared the crowd and was by this time running with long strides and arm raised like a professional runner.

Seeing this, the policeman took a long breath and started after the man, determined to overtake him if it took all day. He had run several blocks and was about winded and ready to drop when the man dodged into a yard, and went up the front steps, and into a house, slamming the door behind him without even turning around to see how near the policeman was on his trail.

When the policeman arrived at the house he tried the door but of course it was locked. He pounded on it with his club, calling out at the same time: "Open the door if you don't want me to break it down!" He had raised his club to give it another fearful whack when it opened in a hurry and in the doorway stood a tall, dignified man dressed in the long black coat of a clergyman, who said in a low, impressive voice: "My good man, why all this racket? Why did you not ring the bell instead of pounding on my door?"

"Stand aside and let me pass or I will have you arrested for harboring thieves!"

As he said this a voice from the head of the stair said: "What is the trouble, father?"

"There he is now, the murderer!"

"Murderer! What do you mean be calling my son a murderer?"

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The policeman did not reply but attempted to push by the clergyman with a rough hand.

"Here, you minion of the law, use a little respect to my old father or I'll chuck you out on the sidewalk," and coming down the stairs, a young man added: "Here I am! Now tell us what this murder business is you are talking about."

"Well, as I was on me beat just about to pass the circus, I heard cries of 'Help! Help! Murder! Murder!' and I ran in to see who was being murdered when I came to a room with a woman lying on the floor screaming murder. She had been knocked over with a chair and seeing the sides of her tent moving, I thought the murderer had just escaped by crawling under the tent. So I ducked under too and, sure enough, what should I see but this man here running for dear life. I called to the crowd to stop him but he ran so fast and pushed them off so when they tried to catch him that I know he was the man that had done the deed. So come on back wid me to the tent and see if your victim is dead or only scared. For it is you in the coop if she is dead."

At the end of this harangue the young man laughed so he had to hold his hands to his sides, while his father and the policeman stood by and looked at him.

"Come in and sit down, officer, while I spoil all your circumstantial evidence."

Billy Whiskers Out for Fun

"Not so fast now, young man! You can tell me right here what ye have to tell. I'm not at all tired and can stand a little longer."

"Well, you see it is this way. I am a professional runner and I usually run stripped to the waist with the regular running togs on, but to-day I thought I would run in my ordinary clothes to see if it made much difference whether one was dressed for it or just in ordinary clothes. I left a crowd of fellows on the college steps so if you want proof that I am not the man you are looking for, I'll go back with you to the college and you can talk to them or, better yet, step inside and call up the college and they will tell you I was there when this supposed murder took place."

"Not on your life will I telephone, for while I am doing it you will slip away."

"Not at all! You may handcuff me while you telephone." This he did and on telephoning to the college received an answer that cleared the young man entirely.

"Now, officer, just to show you there is no ill feeling, join me in a glass of sarsaparilla, for I am terribly thirsty after my run and I know you must be."

"Thank you very much. I will," and the two shook hands to show there was no ill feeling.

On his way back to the police station, the policeman stopped at the circus to see if the murderer had been caught or if there had

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been no murder after all, but just a cry of murder. He found the lady giving a last pat to her elaborately dressed peroxide-colored hair and laughing at a little monkey in a cage and a gold colored parrot with a green tail sitting on a perch on one side of her tent, while the parrot was saying in a singsong voice: "Never again! Never again!" But the monkey sat all crouched up in one corner.

"Oh, officer, is that you? Did you find the man that murdered me?"

"I sure did and he is the gamest young man I ever tried to arrest on the false accusation of a crazy-headed girl!"

"Get right out of here! How dare you call me crazy-headed?"

"Because that is what ye are! You scream 'Help! Help! Murder! Murder!' and disturb the peace."

On hearing this Polly began to cry: "Help! Help! Murder! Murder!"

"Shut up, will ye, ye evil-eyed bird, or I will drown you!"

"Shut up! Shut up! Hear him! Hear him!" squeaked Polly, at which the policeman beat a hasty retreat to the music of the circus lady's laughter and Polly's screeches.

CHAPTER XV

THE CIRCUS BREAKS CAMP



HAT night after the performance the circus broke camp and the friends were separated, the elephant, camel, monkey and parrot going to Bismarck while the moose, zebra, giraffe and sacred bull went to Duluth. But this was not the worst division that was made. Billy was to be sent to Duluth and Stubby and Button to Bismarck. Now here was an unforeseen catastrophe and the circus people, having observed the close companionship of the four, took precaution to lock Billy and Nannie in a cage by themselves and Stubby and Button in another.

"Never mind," counseled Billy. "You and Button go on with the circus for it is headed in the right direction for us and Nannie and I will run away from the circus and join you, never fear, just as soon as they let us out of this pesky cage."

"I *knew* something like this would happen if we stayed with their poky old circus!" grumbled Stubby.

"I know you did, old fellow, but cheer up, we won't be separated long."

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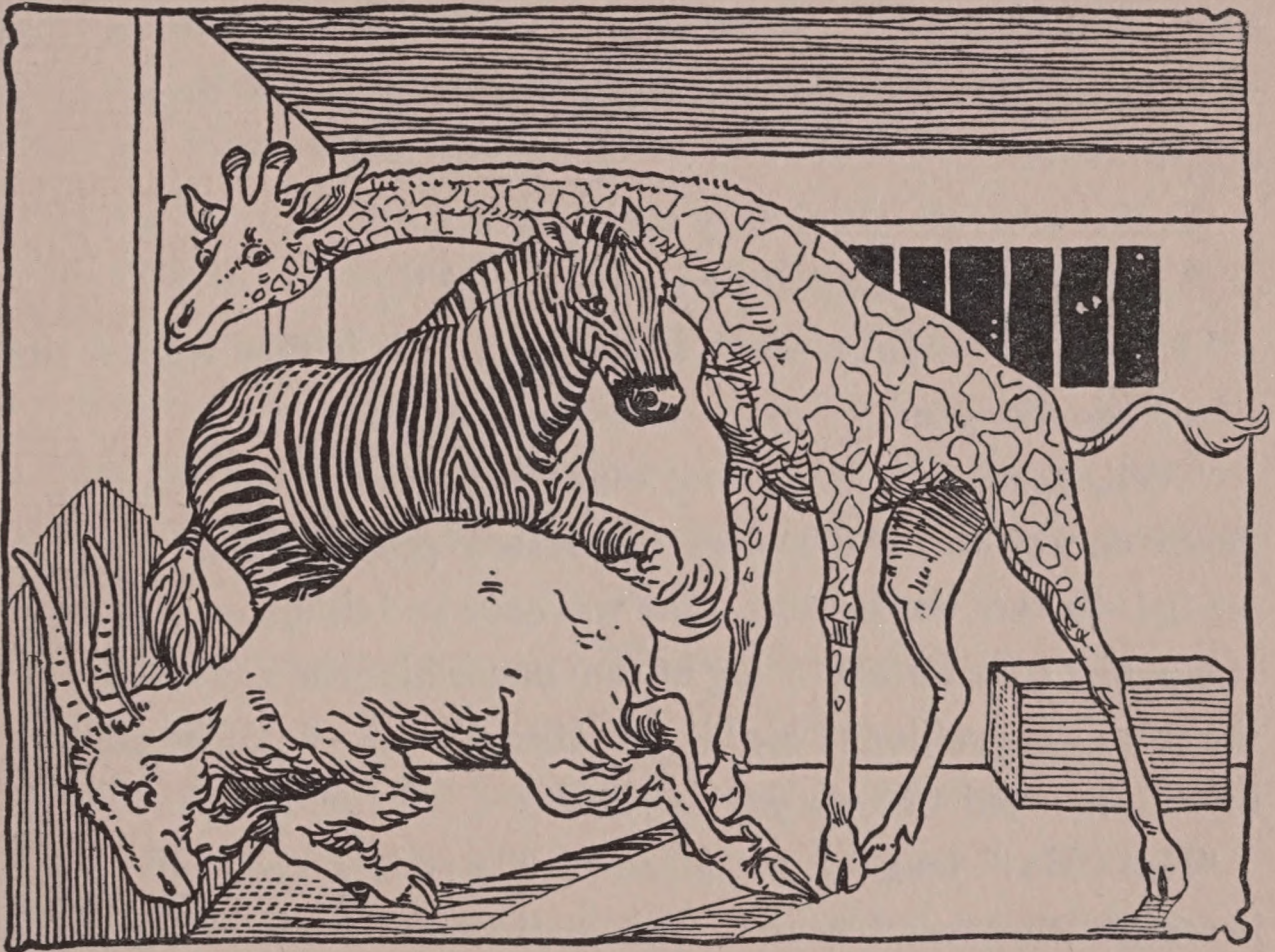
It was astonishing how quickly the circus people folded their tents, gathered up the long lines of seats, and started their wagon cages toward the circus train that lay in the yards with steam up, all ready to start at a moment's notice. Everything about a circus is systematized so that the minute the evening performance is over, everybody jumps to his or her appointed task and works with a will, so that where there were tents with flags and banners flying at night, the next morning there is only a deserted sawdust ring. Circuses spring up over night like mushrooms and disappear as quickly as the dew on the grass when the sun comes up.

By midnight the circus train was well under way and Billy and Nannie found themselves in a cage between the zebra and giraffe. About two o'clock the train stopped at a siding to let a passenger train pass. It being very late they had to wait as all regular trains had the right of way over a special like a circus train.

As this siding was beside a stream on the outskirts of a sleeping little town, it was as still as death with the exception of the frogs in the pond and the katydids quarreling with each other in a tree beside the cage Billy and Nannie were in. Now if there was anything that made Billy nervous and depressed, it was hearing frogs and the hum of insects and katydids. It gave him the blues. At last he could stand it no longer and he baaed to the zebra and giraffe to see if they were awake. Both were and each declared himself wildly

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nervous and unable to sleep with the incessant repetition of "*Katy did! She did! She didn't! She did! She didn't!*" until Billy bawled out:



"Who cares a tinker's dam whether she did or did not? Can't you shut up and let some poor tired animals sleep?"

"Yes," whinnied the zebra, "for mercy sakes give us a rest! I should think you would need one yourselves the way you have been

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calling out 'She *did!* She *didn't!*' faster and faster until I thought your heads would fly off, and to tell you the truth I wish they *had!*'"

"I feel as if my ears were growing as big as my neck," said the giraffe. "Just listening to any noise I don't like makes me feel that way. But I don't mind the katydids as I do those confounded frogs with their 'Mudger-ka-rum, mudger-ka-rum. Knee-deep, knee-deep!'"

"Is that what you think they say?" asked Billy.

"Yes; what do you think they are calling?"

"I don't know, but it doesn't sound to me as if they were saying what it does to you."

"Well, perhaps it would not sound that way to me but I once heard one of the keepers say the reason people think frogs say mudger-ka-rum was because there was once an Irishman going home late at night, half drunk, a jug of rum under his arm, and he thought the frogs were calling to him to give them his jug of rum as mudger-ka-rum sounded like *my jug of rum.*"

"Ha! Ha!" laughed the giraffe. "That is a good one! And hereafter whenever I hear frogs I shall think of that saying. Listen now; it really *does* sound as if that was what they were calling."

"I can't go to sleep until the train starts, so let us tell stories until it does," proposed Billy.

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"Very well, I'm willing," agreed the zebra and giraffe.

"You tell the first one. Tell us something about your experiences in the war," added the giraffe.

"Oh, for mercy sakes don't say war to me! I am sick of the very name of it and I can't bear to even think of its horror, much less tell about the black deeds I saw. You two tell me about your homes in Africa."

"Very well," replied the zebra. "I'll tell you what a merry chase I gave my pursuers when they were trying to catch me. You see white with many, many black stripes in it is hard to see at a distance. It seems to fade into the background. That is why during the war they painted the sides of the ships black and white so as to camouflage them."

"What does camouflage mean?" asked the giraffe.

"You ought to know," replied the zebra, "as your coat is camouflaged, though not just like mine as it has round black and white dots. They make it just as hard to see as stripes like mine."

"Is that so? I never knew that before. But I do know that it is almost impossible to shoot us when on the run, as our coats make it very difficult to judge the distance we are from the hunter. But I never knew it was due to our spots and color."

"Well, as I was saying," continued the zebra, "where I lived there is a kind of tall growth of vegetation with long leaves just the width

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of our stripes and the branches grow straight and tall above our heads. When there is any of that kind of vegetation around and hunters get after us, we make for it and we are seldom seen after we enter, for the waving leaves throw black shadows across us and unless a hunter runs directly into us he will pass within a few feet of us and never discover us."

Just then the train gave a jerk that threw the zebra off its feet, bumped the giraffe's head against the top of its cage and sent Billy's head bang up against the end of his cage and Nannie's short horns into his side.

"Plague take this old train anyway! Why can't the engineer toot the whistle and give a fellow warning that he is going to start? Now we can't hear the rest of your story until we stop again as the train makes too much noise.

"Good-by, you old frogs and katydids, I hope I never, never, never hear you peep again as long as I live!" said Billy.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ESCAPE FROM THE CIRCUS



HE next morning the circus arrived in Duluth. The tents were pitched and then hurry and confusion began as everyone was getting ready for the usual morning parade through the down-town streets of the city.

This was just what Billy had been waiting for, as he intended to watch his chance and run away from the circus while it was on parade. But imagine his disgust when one of the circus men brought a little flat saddle and strapped it on his back and then put a fancy headpiece on his head and brought the monkey that had had the fight with Polly and tied it to one of his horns with a rope just long enough for it to reach the saddle, where the monkey was supposed to dance as the procession moved through the streets.

"I'll run away even if I have to drag the monkey with me, for I shan't stay with the circus another day!" thought Billy. "I am so sick and tired of it. Besides, all the time we are here Stubby and Button are going farther and farther West away from us."

At exactly half past ten the circus procession filed out of the main

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tent headed by a band of twenty pieces following which came the bareback riders on snow white horses or jet black ones, with horses and riders all fixed exactly as they would be seen in the circus ring that afternoon, the women riders in their short tulle skirts with bare necks and arms and the men in their tights. Behind them came the performing animals and gilded chariots drawn by tiny Shetland ponies driven by little girls dressed as fairies or little boys dressed as princes. After them came the elephants, camels, sacred bull, zebras and so on, led by their keepers dressed in uniforms of black pants and red coats trimmed with gold lace and cords. Following all this were the cages with the animals in them, and one could see the giraffe sticking his head out of the hole in the roof so he could rest his long neck, and the tigers and lions pacing up and down their cages trying to get out.

All the time the procession was making its way slowly through the streets the clown walked beside it talking to the crowds on the sidewalk. Oh, it was most exciting to the small boys and girls who never had seen a circus procession go by.

But oh my, how deadly tiresome it was to the poor performers and animals that had to take part! Billy and Nannie happened to be about the middle of the procession and as bad luck would have it, one of the clowns had selected just that place to walk. Billy was growing more desperate every block they went at not seeing a single

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good chance to escape. For should he start to run away the clown would give the alarm and one of the guards of the procession in policeman's uniform and mounted on horseback would give chase and capture him. Besides, he would have to butt his way through the crowds of people who were lining the sidewalks so closely it would be like butting through a stone wall.

"Oh! What shall I do?" and Billy had dropped his head in disappointment and was paying no attention to the monkey on his back who kept on dancing and hitting his head with the little tambourine he had in his hand. All of a sudden he heard a great clattering of wheels and tooting of horns coming down a side street and just as his part of the procession got to the corner it parted so the fire engine and hook-and-ladder could go across the street.

Now was their chance. "Follow me, Nannie!" called Billy and with a bound forward he reached the middle of the street and ran under the hook-and-ladder auto, though it was going at breakneck speed and he ran the chance of being killed instantly. So did Nannie. Still it was Billy's way to take a chance every time, no matter how dangerous it was. Once under the machine, they ran for all they were worth to keep covered by its long ladders so no one could see them. Their escape had been so sudden and just at a time when all eyes were on the fire engine and hook-and-ladder, that no one belonging to the circus saw them.

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The poor little monkey on Billy's back was nearly scared to death so when he saw the ladders over his head he jumped from the little saddle on Billy's back up on them. Luck was with him for the sudden jerk on the rope untied the loose knot and he found himself free, much to his delight as well as Billy's.

Presently the hook-and-ladder stopped and Billy could smell smoke and see fire ahead of them. But what made his heart bound with delight was that it had stopped directly opposite the opening into an alley. With a squeal of delight Billy and Nannie darted from under the machine and ran down the alley, never stopping until they were many blocks away.

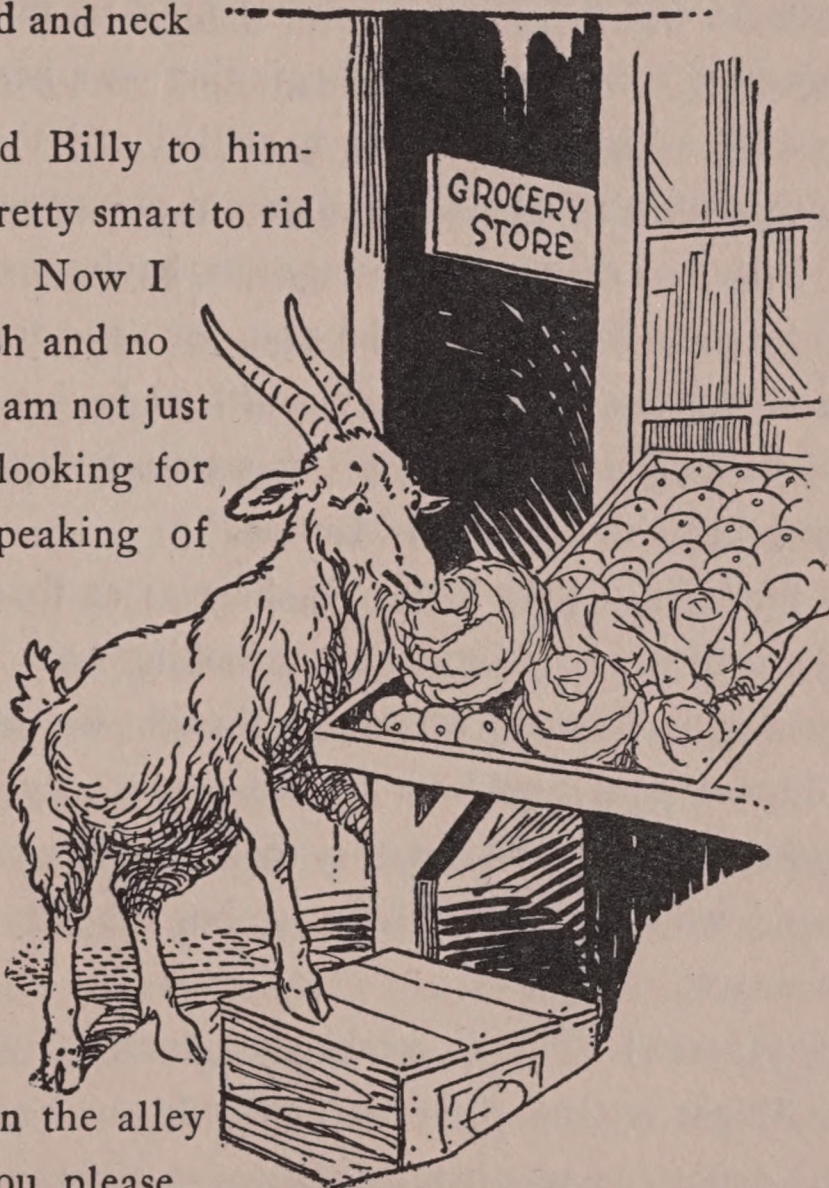
Now the question was, how was he to get the saddle from his back? Should anyone see him with it they would know he had run away from the circus. He would have to stay hid in the alley and not show himself on the streets until after dark. Seeing a packing box leaning against a fence, Billy nosed around until he found it was empty. Then they squeezed themselves between the fence and the box and lay down to rest and try to think out some way to free him from the saddle.

While turning his head to look at it he found that by stretching his neck he could just get hold of the edge of the girth that strapped it to his back. Consequently he began squirming and twisting until he got a good hold with his teeth. Then with a mighty tug he pulled

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it toward his head, and joy of joys! in three long strong pulls he had it up to his neck. So all he had to do was to duck his head and the saddle fell over his head and neck to the floor of the box.

"Ha! Ha!" laughed Billy to himself. "I think I am pretty smart to rid myself of that saddle. Now I can go wherever I wish and no one will suspect that I am not just an ordinary goat out looking for something to eat. Speaking of eats, I believe I'm hungry. Aren't you, Nannie? Now that we are rested, I think we had better go in search of food." So they squeezed themselves out of the box and went trotting down the alley as independently as you please.



When they reached the corner where the alley crossed the street, they found a grocery store with baskets of vegetables and fruit dis-

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played outside. Billy took a peek and no one being in sight, he reached for a nice fresh cabbage and retired to the alley to eat it. Nannie did the same. Having finished the cabbage, they ate a bunch of carrots and were beginning on a head of lettuce when the grocery wagon drove into the alley and the driver chased them away with his long whip and then threw stones at them.

Billy was now feeling pretty fine, having had all he wanted to eat, so he thought, "Now is the time for us to find the depot, so I can see if we can't steal a ride out of here back to Minneapolis. There we must change cars and get on a train going west, or we will never catch up with Stubby and Button."

Had Billy only known it, he was at that minute within three blocks of the very depot he was looking for. He did not know this, but hearing a train whistle he thought he would follow the sound and see where it led him, in town or out. By jumping a fence or two and crossing a vacant lot, they soon came to a railroad track and looking down it what should he see but the very circus train they had come on!

"Hurrah! This is surely good luck for us for now I know we shall get on the right train to take us back. We'll go over to the depot and watch for a chance to sneak into a freight car going in the right direction to carry us back to Minneapolis."

Billy soon found a good place for them to hide from which they

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could watch all the incoming and outgoing trains, but he saw no freight cars with the doors open. What he *did* see when it grew dark and the lights were lighted was an express mail train all made up and ready to start. He could see men throwing on mail bags and storing away express packages while the engine blew off steam and waited for the signal. He was watching this intently when the audacious thought struck him, "Why not go on that train instead of waiting for some old slow freight? We will try it. They can but throw us off and I'll put up such a fight they won't dare do it after we have once started. But the hard part will be to get aboard without one or the other of us being seen. However, it is pretty dark, which will help some, and I am going to try it."

So they trotted across the intervening tracks and jumped up on the platform. Now there were two platforms where this train stood and the doors of the car were open on each side so a person could board the train from either side. Billy noticed this, and while the man in charge of the mail car was standing at one door talking to the driver of a mail wagon that had just brought a big lot of mail bags, Billy and Nannie stepped in the opposite door and tip-toed into a dimly-lighted corner and hid behind a pile of mail bags. They had scarcely secreted themselves when the train gave a jerk and they were off.

"Pretty slick work I call that!" said Billy. "This surely has been

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our lucky day to run away from the circus and get started back to Minneapolis."

This train was the fast night express and made but one stop between Duluth and Minneapolis, so when the train was out of the suburbs and rolling along through the quiet country, the mailman turned the lights down low and threw himself on a cot at the side of the car and was soon fast asleep. He never awoke until the train whistled for St. Paul. Then he was up and on his feet and ready to open the door the minute the train stopped. As he was removing the inner bar that fastened the door, he thought he heard a noise behind him, but he did not bother to look around to see what it was. Imagine his surprise when the door slipped open to see two big white goats leap past him and run down the platform and disappear in the crowd!

"Well, I'll be hanged! How in the world did those goats get in my car and me not know it?"

As Billy and Nannie stood outside the station wondering what they would do next, who should they see coming down the street but Stubby and Button.

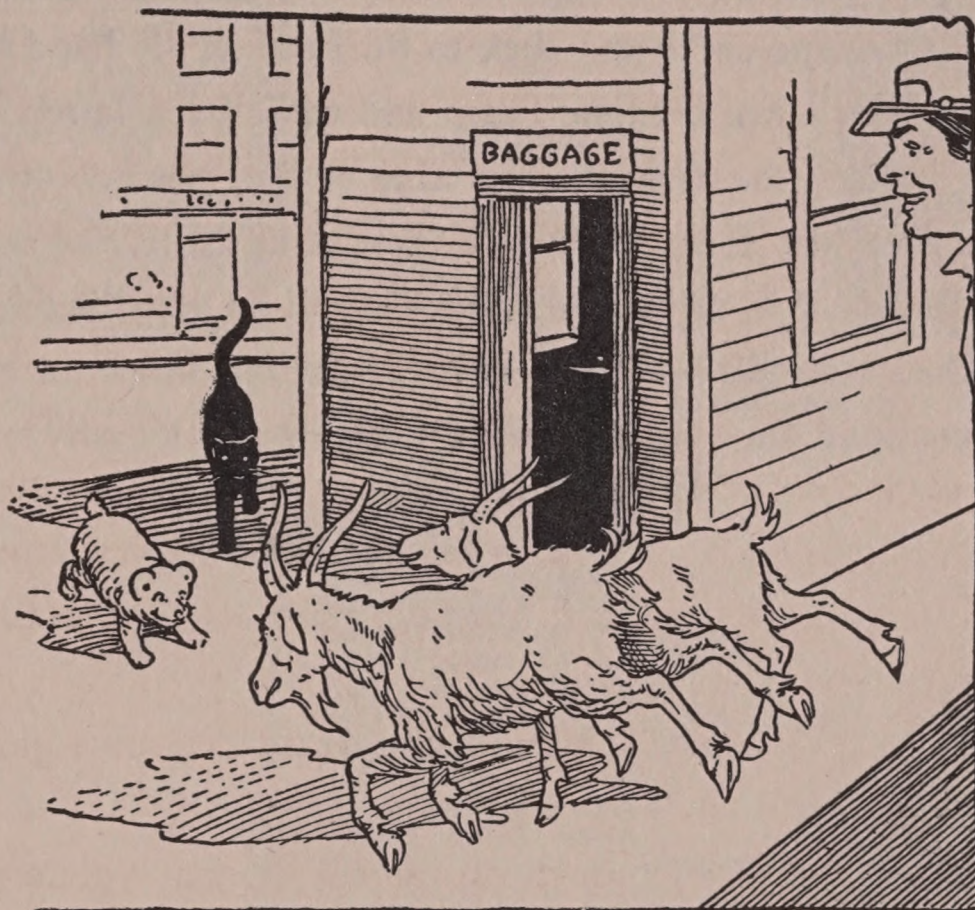
"Nannie, do my eyes deceive me, or is that really and truly Stubby and Button I see coming toward us?"

"It really is!"

"Well, well, well! Of all that is wonderful, where in the world

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did you come from? The last we saw of you, you were in the circus train bound for Bismarck, North Dakota, and at this minute we were wondering how we could get to you the quickest way."



"Yes," spoke up Nannie, "we were debating which would be the safest and easiest, to try stealing a ride on a train or foot it. But my, I am glad you are here! Come here until we rub noses!"

"This beats any luck we have had for some time," answered Stubby.

"I should say so," agreed Button, "as we left the circus on pur-

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pose to come back and look for you two! As you did not come on and we were to be carried further West the next morning which would separate us more and more every day they traveled, we determined to escape and come back to St. Paul in the hope of meeting your circus when it broke camp and came back here. But we expected to have the dickens' own time to find you. Now we are all together again, I say we take a look at this city and try to get a little fun out of it, for so far our trip has had very little pleasure in it. Then after we have had all the hilarious times we care for, we can continue our journey west to the Pacific Coast."

THE END

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